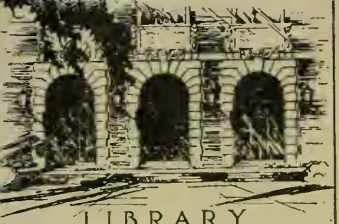

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VIVIAN GREY.

"Why then the world's mine oyster,
Which I with sword will open."

VOL. III.

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VIVIAN GREY.

BOOK THE FIFTH.

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CHAPTER I.

Thou rapid Aar! thy waves are swollen by the snows of a thousand hills—but for whom are thy leaping waters fed?—Is it for the Rhine?

Calmly, oh! placid Neckar, does thy blue stream glide through thy vine-clad vales—but calmer seems thy course when it touches the rushing Rhine!

How fragrant are the banks which are cooled by thy dark-green waters, thou tranquil Maine!—but is not the perfume sweeter of the gardens of the Rhine?

Thou impetuous NAH! I lingered by thine islands of nightingales, and I asked thy rushing waters why they disturbed the music of thy groves?—They told me, they were hastening to the RHINE!

Red MOSELLE! fierce is the swell of thy spreading course—but why do thy broad waters blush when they meet the RHINE?

Thou delicate MEUSE! how clear is the current of thy limpid wave—as the wife yields to the husband, do thy pure waters yield to the RHINE!

And thou! triumphant and imperial River, flushed with the tribute of these vassal streams; thou art thyself a tributary, and hastenest even in the pride of conquest to confess thine own vassalage! But no superior stream exults in the homage of thy servile waters: the Ocean, the eternal Ocean, alone comes forward to receive thy kiss!—not as a conqueror, but as a parent, he welcomes with proud joy his gifted child, the offspring of his honour; thy duty—his delight; thy tribute—thine own glory!

Once more upon thy banks, most beauteous

RHINE! In the spring-time of my youth I gazed on thee, and deemed thee matchless. Thy vine-enamoured mountains—thy spreading waters—thy traditionary crags—thy shining cities—the sparkling villages of thy winding shores—thy antique convents—thy grey and silent castles—the purple glories of thy radiant grape—the vivid tints of thy teeming flowers—the fragrance of thy sky—the melody of thy birds, whose carols tell the pleasures of their sunny woods,—are they less lovely now, less beautiful, less sweet?

Once more upon thy banks, most beauteous RHINE! Since I first gazed on thee, other climes have revealed to me their wonders, and their glory—other climes, which Fame, perhaps, loves more; which many deem more beautiful—but not for a moment have I forgotten thy varied banks, and my memory still clings to thee, thou River of my Youth!

The keen emotions of our youth are often the occasion of our estimating too ardently; but the first impression of beauty, though often overcharged, is seldom supplanted: and as the

first great author which he reads is reverenced by the boy as the most immortal, and the first beautiful woman that he meets is sanctified by him as the most adorable; so the impressions created upon us by those scenes of nature which first realize the romance of our reveries never escape from our minds, and are ever consecrated in our memories;—and thus some great spirits, after having played their part on the theatre of the world, have retired from the blaze of courts and cities, to the sweet seclusion of some spot, which they have accidentally met with in the earliest years of their career.

But we are to speak of one who had retired from the world before his time; of one, whose early vices, and early follies, have been already obtruded, for no unworthy reason, on the notice of the public, in as hot and hurried a sketch as ever yet was penned; but like its subject; for what is youth but a sketch—a brief hour of principles unsettled, passions unrestrained, powers undeveloped, and purposes unexecuted!

I am loth to speak even one moment of the author, instead of the hero; but with respect

to those who have with such singular industry associated the character of the author of Vivian Grey with that of his hero; I must observe, that as this is an inconvenience which I share in company with more celebrated writers, so also is it one which will never prevent me from describing any character which my mind may conceive.

To those who, alike unacquainted with my person, my life, my habits, have, with that audacious accuracy for which ignorance is celebrated, not only boldly avowed that the original of my hero may be discovered in myself, but that the character, at the same time, forms also a flattering portrait of a more frail original, I shall say nothing. Most of these chatterers are included in that vast catalogue of frivolous beings who carry on in society an espionage on a small scale, not precisely through malice, but from an invincible ambition of having something to say, when they have nothing to think about. A few of these persons, I am informed, cannot even plead a brainless skull as an excuse for their indecent conduct; but dreading that in time

the lash might be applied to their own guilty littleness, they have sought in the propagation of falsehood on their part, a boasted means for the prevention of further publication on mine. Unlucky rogues! how effectual have been your exertions! Let me not by one irritable expression console these clumsy midwives of calumny for the abortion of their slander; but pass over their offences with that merciful silence, to which even insolent imbecility is ever entitled.

Of the personal, and political matter contained in the former books of this work, I can declare, that though written in a hasty, it was not written in a reckless spirit; and that there is nothing contained in those volumes of which I am morally ashamed. As to the various satires in verse, and political and dramatic articles of unsuccessful newspapers, which have been palmed, with such lavish liberality, upon myself, or upon another individual as the supposed author of this work—inasmuch, as I never wrote one single line of them, neither of the articles nor of the satires, it is unnecessary for

me to apologise for their contents. They have been made the ostensible, the avowed pretext for a series of attacks, which I now, for once, notice, only to recommend them to the attentive study of those ingenious gentlemen who wish to be libellers with impunity; and who are desirous of vindicating imaginary wrongs, or maintaining a miserable existence by the publication of periodical rhapsodies, whose foul scurrility, over-wrought malice, ludicrous passion, evident mendacity, and frantic feebleness, alike exempt them from the castigation of literary notice, or the severer penalties of an outraged law.

Of the literary vices of Vivian Grey, no one is perhaps more sensible than their author. I conceived the character of a youth of great talents, whose mind had been corrupted, as the minds of many of our youth have been, by the artificial age in which he lived. The age was not less corrupted than the being it had generated. In his whole career he was to be pitied; but for his whole career he was not to be less punished. When I sketched the feel-

ings of his early boyhood, as the novelist, I had already foreseen the results to which those feelings were to lead; and had in store for the fictitious character the punishment which he endured. I am blamed for the affectation, the flippancy, the arrogance, the wicked wit of this fictitious character. Yet was Vivian Grey to talk like Simon Pure, and act like Sir Charles Grandison?

But to our tale.—Upwards of a year had now elapsed since Vivian Grey left England. The mode of life which he pursued at Heidelburg for many months, has already been mentioned. He felt himself a broken-hearted man, and looked for death, whose delay was no blessing; but the feelings of youth which had misled him in his burning hours of joy, equally deceived him in his days of sorrow. He lived; and in the course of time, found each day that life was less burdensome. The truth is, that if it be the lot of man to suffer, it is also his fortune to forget. Oblivion and Sorrow share our being in much the same manner, as Darkness and Light divide the course of time. It is not

in human nature to endure extremities, and sorrows soon destroy either us, or themselves. Perhaps the fate of Niobe is no fable, but a type of the callousness of our nature. There is a time in human suffering when succeeding sorrows are but like snow falling on an iceberg. It is true, that it is horrible to think that our peace of mind should arise, not from a retrospection of the past, but from a forgetfulness of it: but, though this peace of mind is produced at the best by a mental laudanum, it is not valueless; and Oblivion, after all, is a just judge. As we retain but a faint remembrance of our felicity, it is but fair that the smartest stroke of sorrow should, if bitter, at least be brief. But in feeling that he might yet again mingle in the world, Vivian Grey also felt that he must meet mankind with different feelings, and view their pursuits with a different interest. He woke from his secret sorrow in as changed a state of being, as the water nymph from her first embrace; and he woke with a new possession, not only as miraculous as Undine's soul, but gained at as great a price, and leading to as bitter results.

The nymph woke to new pleasures, and to new sorrows; and innocent as an infant she deemed mankind a god, and the world a paradise. Vivian Grey discovered that this deity was but an idol of brass, and this garden of Eden but a savage waste; for if the river nymph had gained a soul, he had gained EXPERIENCE.

EXPERIENCE—word so lightly used, so little understood! Experience,—mysterious spirit! whose result is felt by all, whose nature is described by none. The father warns the son of your approach, and sometimes looks to you as his offspring's cure, and his own consolation. We hear of you in the nursery—we hear of you in the world—we hear of you in books; but who has recognised you until he was your subject, and who has discovered the object of so much fame, until he has kissed your chain? To gain you is the work of all, and the curse of all; you are at the same time necessary to our happiness, and destructive of our felicity; you are the saviour of all things, and the destroyer of all things; our best friend, and our bitterest enemy; for you teach us truth, and that truth

is—despair. Ye youth of England, would that ye could read this riddle!

To wake from your bright hopes, and feel that all is vanity—to be roused from your crafty plans, and know that all is worthless, is a bitter, but your sure destiny. Escape is impossible; for despair is the price of conviction. How many centuries have fled, since Solomon, in his cedar palaces, sung the vanity of man! Though his harp was golden, and his throne of ivory, his feelings were not less keen, and his conviction not less complete. How many sages of all nations, have, since the monarch of Jerusalem, echoed his sad philosophy! yet the vain bubble still glitters, and still allures, and must for ever.

The genealogy of Experience is brief; for Experience is the child of Thought, and Thought is the child of Action. We cannot learn men from books, nor can we form, from written descriptions, a more accurate idea of the movements of the human heart, than we can of the movements of nature. A man may read all his life, and form no conception of the rush of a mountain torrent,

or the waving of a forest of pines in a storm; and a man may study in his closet the heart of his fellow creatures for ever, and have no idea of the power of ambition, or the strength of revenge.

It is when we have acted ourselves, and have seen others acting; it is when we have laboured ourselves under the influence of our passions, and have seen others labouring; it is when our great hopes have been attained, or have been baulked; it is when, after having had the human heart revealed to us, we have the first opportunity to think; it is then, if we can think, that the whole truth lights upon us; it is then that we ask of ourselves whether it be wise to endure such anxiety of mind, such agitation of spirit, such harrowing of the soul, to gain what may cease to interest to-morrow, or for which, at the best, a few years of enjoyment can alone be afforded; it is then that we waken to the hollowness of all human things; it is then that the sayings of sages, and the warnings of prophets are explained and understood; it is then that we gain EXPERIENCE.

To deem all things vain is not the part of a disappointed man, who may feign it, but who can never feel it. To deem all things vain is the bitter portion of that mind, who, having known the world, dares to think. Experience will arise as often from satiety of joy, as from the sting of sorrow. But knowledge of the world is only an acquaintance with the powers of human passions, formed from our observation of our fellow creatures, and of ourselves. He whose courage has been put to the test—who has relied on the love, or suffered by the hate of woman—has been deceived by man, and has deceived himself—may have as much knowledge of the world at twenty, as if he had lived a century. We may travel over the whole globe, and not gain more, although, certainly, we might have more opportunities of seeing the same farce repeated, the same game of broken promises, and baulked hopes, false expectation, and self-delusion. Few men were better acquainted with their species than Gil Blas, when he sat down at Lirias, and yet he had only travelled in two or three Spanish provinces.

Vivian Grey woke, as we have said, to a conviction of the worthlessness of human fortunes. His character was changed; and this is the most wonderful of all revolutions—a revolution which precept or reason can never bring about, but which a change of circumstances or fortune may. In his career through the world he resembled a turbid mountain river, whose colour had been cleared, and whose course had been calmed in its passage through a lake.

But he commenced by founding his philosophy on a new error; for he fancied himself passionless, which man never is. His trial had been severe, and because he could no longer interest himself in any of the usual pursuits of men, he believed that he could interest himself in none. But doubting of all things, he doubted of himself; and finding himself so changed from what he had been only a year or two before, he felt as if he should not be astonished if he changed again.

With all his grief, he was no cynic—if he smiled on men, it was not in bitterness; if he thought them base, he did not blame them.

He pitied those whose baseness, in his opinion, was their sufficient punishment; for nothing they could attain could repay them for the hot contest of their passions. Subdued, but not melancholy; contemplative, but not gloomy; he left his solitude. Careless of what was to come, the whole world was before him. Indifference is at least the boon of sorrow; for none look forward to the future with indifference, who do not look back to the past with dread.

Vivian Grey was now about to join, for the second time, the great and agitated crowd of beings, who are all intent in the search after that undiscoverable talisman—HAPPINESS. That he entertained the slightest hopes of being the successful inquirer, is not for a moment to be imagined. He considered that the happiest moment in human life is exactly the sensation of a sailor who has escaped a shipwreck; and that the mere belief that his wishes are to be indulged, is the greatest bliss enjoyed by man.

How far his belief was correct, how he prospered in this, his second venture on the great ocean of life, it is our business to relate. There

were moments, when he wished himself neither experienced nor a philosopher—moments when he looked back to the lost paradise of his innocent boyhood—those glorious hours, when the unruffled river of his Life mirrored the cloudless heaven of his Hope!

CHAPTER II.

VIVIAN pulled up his horse as he ascended through the fine beech wood, which leads immediately to the city of Frankfort, from the Darmstadt road. The crowd seemed to increase every moment, but as they were all hastening the same way, his progress was not much impeded. It was Frankfort fair; and all countenances were expressive of that excitement which we always experience at great meetings of our fellow creatures; whether the assemblies be for slaughter, pleasure, or profit, and whether or not we ourselves join in the banquet, the battle, or the fair. At the top of the hill is an old Roman tower, and from this point the flourishing city of Frankfort, with its pic-

turesque Cathedral, its numerous villas, and beautiful gardens in the middle of the fertile valley of the Maine, burst upon Vivian's sight. On crossing the bridge over the river, the crowd became almost impassable, and it was with the greatest difficulty that Vivian steered his way through the old narrow winding streets, full of tall ancient houses, with heavy casements and notched gable ends. These structures did not, however, at the present moment, greet the traveller with their usual sombre and antique appearance: their outside walls were in most instances, entirely covered with pieces of broad cloth of the most showy colours; red, blue, and yellow predominating. These standards of trade were not merely used for the purpose of exhibiting the quality of the articles sold in the interior; but, also, of informing the curious traveller, the name and nation of their adventurous owners. Inscriptions in German, French, Russian, English, Italian, and even Hebrew, appeared in striking characters on each woollen specimen; and, as if these were not sufficient to attract the attention of the passenger, an active apprentice, or aassistant, commented in

eloquent terms on the peculiar fairness and honesty of his master. The public squares, and other open spaces, and indeed every spot which was secure from the hurrying wheels of the heavy old-fashioned coaches of the Frankfort aristocracy, and the spirited pawings of their sleek and long-tailed coach horses, were covered with large and showy booths, which groaned under the accumulated treasures of all countries: French silks, and French clocks, rivalled Manchester cottons, and Sheffield cutlery; and assisted to attract, or entrap the gazer, in company with Venetian chains, Neapolitan coral, and Vienna pipeheads: here was the booth of a great bookseller, who looked to the approaching Leipsic fair for some consolation for his slow sale, and the bad taste of the people of Frankfort; and there was a dealer in Bologna sausages, who felt quite convinced that in some things the taste of the Frankfort public was by no means to be lightly spoken of. All was bustle, bargaining, and business: there were quarrels, and conversation in all languages; and Vivian Grey, although he had no chance either of winning or losing money, was amused.

At last, Vivian gained the High street; and here, though the crowd was not less, the space was greater; and so in time he arrived at the grand hotel of "the Roman Emperor," where he stopped. It was a long time before he could be informed whether Baron Julius von Konigstein at present honoured that respectable establishment with his presence; for, although Vivian did sometimes succeed in obtaining an audience of a hurrying waiter, that animal, when in a hurry, has a peculiar habit of never attending to a question which a traveller addresses to him. In this dilemma Vivian was saluted by a stately-looking personage above the common height. He was dressed in a very splendid uniform of green and gold, covered with embroidery, and glittering with frogs. He wore a cocked hat, adorned with a flowing party-coloured plume, and from his broad golden belt was suspended a weapon of singular shape, and costly workmanship. This personage was as stiff and stately, as he was magnificent. His eyes were studiously preserved from the profanation of meeting the ground, and his well

supported neck seldom condescended to move from its perpendicular position. His coat was buttoned to the chin and over the breast, with the exception of one small aperture, which was elegantly filled up by a delicate white cambric handkerchief, very redolent of rich perfumes. This gorgeous gentleman, who might have been mistaken for an elector of the German empire, had the German empire been in existence, or the governor of the city at the least, turned out to be the chasseur of the Baron von Konigstein; and with his courtly assistance, Vivian soon found himself ascending the staircase of the Roman Emperor.

Vivian was ushered into an apartment, in which he found three or four individuals at breakfast. A middle-aged man of very elegant appearance, in a most *outré* morning gown of Parisian chintz, sprung up from a many-cushioned easy-chair of scarlet morocco, and seized his hand as he was announced.

"My dear Mr. Grey! and so you are really kind enough to call upon me—I was so fearful lest you should not come—Eugene was so de-

sirous that we should meet, and has said so many things of you, that I should have been mortified beyond expression if we had missed. I have left notes for you at all the principal hotels in the city. And how is Eugene? his, is wild blood for a young student, but a good heart, an excellent heart—and you have been so kind to him!—he feels under such particular obligations to you—under very particular obligations I assure you—and will you breakfast? —Ah! I see you smile at my supposing a horseman unbreakfasted. And have you ridden here from Heidelburg this morning? impossible! Only from Darmstadt! I thought so! You were at the Opera then last night. And how is the little Signora? We are to gain her though! trust the good people of Frankfort for that! Pray be seated—but really I'm forgetting the commonest rules of breeding. Next to the pleasure of having friends, is that of introducing them to each other—Prince, you will have great pleasure in being introduced to my friend Mr. Grey—Mr. Grey!—Prince Salvinski! my particular friend, Prince Salvinski. The Count

von Altenburgh! Mr. Grey! my very particular friend, the Count von Altenburgh—and the Chevalier de Bœffleurs! Mr. Grey! my most particular friend, the Chevalier de Bœffleurs."

After this most hospitable reception from a man he had never seen before, Vivian Grey sat down. Baron Julius von Konigstein was minister to the Diet of Frankfort, from what is termed a "first rate" German power. In person he was short, but most delicately formed; his head was a little bald, but as he was only five-and-thirty, this could scarcely be from age; and his remaining hair, black, glossy, and curling, proved that their companion ringlets had not been long lost. His features were small, but not otherwise remarkable; except a pair of luscious-looking, liquid black eyes, of great size, which would have hardly become a stoic, and which gleamed with great meaning, and perpetual animation.

"I understand, Mr. Grey, that you 're a regular philosopher. Pray who is the favourite master? Kant or Fichte? or is there any other

new star who has discovered the origin of our essence, and proved the non-necessity of eating! Count, let me help you to a little more of these *saucisses aux choux*. I 'm afraid, from Eugene's account, that you 're almost past redemption; and I 'm sorry to say, that although I 'm very desirous of being your physician and effecting your cure, Frankfort will supply me with very few drugs to work your recovery. If you could but get me an appointment once again to your delightful London, I might indeed produce some effect; or were I even at Berlin, or at your delicious Vienna, Count Altenburgh! (the Count bowed); or at that Paradise of women, Warsaw, Prince Salvinski!! (the Prince bowed); or at Paris!!! Chevalier (the Chevalier bowed); why then, indeed, you should have some difficulty in finding an excuse for being in low spirits with Julius von Konigstein! But, Frankfort, my dear fellow, is really the most horrible of all human places! perfectly provincial—eh! de Bœffleurs?"

"Oh! perfectly provincial," sighed the French Chevalier, who was also attached to a

mission in this very city, and who was thinking of his own gay Boulevards, and his brilliant Tuileries.

"And the men, such brutes! mere citizens!" continued the Baron, taking a long pinch of snuff,—"mere citizens! Do you take snuff? I merely keep this box for my friends;" and here he extended to Vivian a magnificent gold snuff-box, covered with the portrait of a crowned head, surrounded with diamonds: "A present from the King of Sardinia, when I negociated the marriage of the Duke of —— and his niece, and settled the long agitated controversy about the right of anchovy fishing on the left bank of the Mediterranean: I merely keep it for my friends; my *own* snuff is *here*." And the Baron pointed very significantly to his waistcoat-pocket, cased with tin.

"But the women," continued the Baron, "the women—*that* is a different thing.—There's some amusement among the little bourgeoises, who are glad enough to get rid of their commercial beaus; whose small talk, after a waltz, is about bills of exchange, mixed up with a little

patriotism about their free city, and some chatter about what they call—'the fine arts;' their horrid collections of 'the Dutch school:'—*School* forsooth! a cabbage, by Gerard Dow! and a candlestick, by Mieris!—And now will you take a basin of soup, and warm yourself, while his Highness continues his account of being frozen to death this spring at the top of Mont-Blanc: how was it, Prince?"

"I think I was at the second attempt?" asked the Pole, collecting himself after this long interruption.—He was, as all Poles are, a great traveller; had seen much, and described more—though a great liar, he was a dull man; and the Baron, who never allowed himself to be outdone in a good story, affected to credit the Prince's, and returned him his thanks in kine, which his Highness, in spite of his habitual mendacity on the point of his own travels, singularly enough, always credited.

"Did your Highness ultimately ascend to the top of Mont Blanc?" asked Vivian.

"No——" said the Prince very slowly, as if he confessed the fact with reluctance: "I did

not—I certainly did not; although I did reach a much higher point than I contemplated after my repulse; a point, indeed, which would warrant some individuals in asserting that they had even reached the summit; but in matters of science I am scrupulously correct, and I certainly cannot say that I did reach the *extreme* top. I say so, because, as I believe, I mentioned before, in matters of science I make it a point to be particularly correct. It is singular, but no less true, that after reaching the fifth glacier, I encountered a pyramidal elevation of, I should calculate, fifteen hundred feet in height. This pyramidal elevation was not perpendicular, but had an unhappy inclination forward, of about one inch in eight. It was entirely of solid, green, polished ice. Nature had formed no rut to assist the philosopher.—I paused before this pyramidal elevation of polished, slippery, green ice. I was informed that it was necessary for me to ascend this pyramidal elevation during the night; and this pyramidal elevation of solid, green, polished, slippery ice, Mr. Grey, with an unhappy incli-

nation forward, of one inch in eight from the perpendicular, was the top of Mont Blanc. Saussure may *say* that he ascended it for *ever!* For my part, when I beheld this pyramidal elevation, gentlemen, I was not surprised that there was some little variance as to the exact height of this mighty mountain, among all those philosophers who profess to have reached its summit." On this head the travelling Pole would have discoursed for ever; but the Baron, with his usual presence of mind, dexterously interfered.

"You were fortunate, Prince; I congratulate you. I've heard of that iceberg before. I remember, my cousin, who ascended the mountain about ten years ago—was it ten years ago?—yes, ten years ago. I remember he slept at the foot of that very pyramidal elevation, in a miserable mountain-hut, intending to climb it in the morning. He was not so well-instructed as your Highness, who, doubtless, avoided the diurnal ascent, from fear of the effect of the sun's rays on the slippery ice. Well, my cousin, as I said before, slept in the mountain-

hut; and in the night there came such a fall of snow, that when he awoke, he found the cottage-door utterly blocked up. In fact, the whole building was encrusted in a coating of snow, of above forty feet thick. In this state of affairs, having previously made a nuncupative will, to which the guides were to be witnesses, in case of their escape, he resigned himself to his fate. But Providence interfered; a violent tornado arose. Among other matter, the gigantic snow-ball was lifted up in the air with as much ease as if it were merely a drop of sleet. It bounded from glacier to glacier with the most miraculous rapidity, and at length vaulted on the Mer-de-glace, where it cracked into a thousand pieces. My cousin was taken up by a couple of young English ladies, who were sketching the Montanvert, with three or four of the principal glaciers for a back-ground. The only inconveniences he sustained were a severe cold, and a slight contusion; and he was so enchanted with the manners of the youngest lady, who, by the bye, had a very considerable fortune, that he

married her the next week." Here the Baron took a very long pinch of snuff.

"*Mon Dieu!*" exclaimed the Polish Prince, who affected French manners.

"*Mon Dieu!*" exclaimed the Austrian Count, who was equally refined.

"*Mon Dieu!*" exclaimed the Frenchman; who, believing his own country superior in every possible particular, was above borrowing even an oath, or an ejaculation, from another land.

"Mr. Grey—I wish that Frankfort could have been honoured by your presence yesterday," said the Baron; "there really was an entertainment at the President's, which was not contemptible, and a fine display of women, a very fine display!—eh, de Bœffleurs?"

"Remarkably so indeed! but what a room!" said the Chevalier, shrugging up his shoulders, and elevating his eye-brows.

"We want the saloon of Wisbaden here," said the Baron; "with that, Frankfort might be endurable. As it is, I really must give up my appointment; I cannot carry on public business in a city with such a saloon as we met in last night."

"The most imposing room, on the whole, that I ever was in," said Prince Salvinski, "is the chief hall of the seraglio at Constantinople. It 's a most magnificent room."

"You have been in the interior of the seraglio then?" asked Vivian.

"All over it, Sir, all over it! The women unfortunately were not there; they were at a summer palace on the Bosphorus, where they are taken regularly every year for an airing in large gold cages."

"And was the furniture of the room you are speaking of very gorgeous?"

"No, by no means; a great deal of gilding and carving, but rude, rude; very much like the exterior carving of a man of war; nothing exquisite. I remember the floor was covered with carpets, which, by the bye, were English. To give you an idea of the size of the room, it might have taken, perhaps, sixty of the largest carpets that you ever saw to cover the floor of it."

"Does your Highness take snuff?" asked the Baron drily.

"Thank you, no; I've left off snuff ever

since I passed a winter at Baffin's Bay. You've no idea how very awkward an accidental sneeze is near the pole."

"Your Highness, I imagine, has been a great traveller;" said Vivian, to the Baron's great annoyance. Unfortunately Vivian was not so much used to Prince Salvinski as his Excellency.

"I have seen a little of most countries: these things are interesting enough when we are young; but when we get a little more advanced in life, the novelty wears off, and the excitement ceases. I have been in all quarters of the globe. In Europe I have seen every thing except the miracles of Prince Hohenlohe. In Asia I have seen every thing except the ruins of Babylon. In Africa, I have seen every thing but Timbuctoo; and in America, I have seen every thing except Croker's Mountains."

All this time the Austrian had not joined in the conversation; not, however, because his mouth was shut—that is never the fault of an Austrian. Count von Altenburgh had now,

however, finished his breakfast. Next to eating, music is the business in which an Austrian is most interested. The Count having had the misfortune of destroying, for the present, one great source of his enjoyment, became very anxious to know what chance there existed of his receiving some consolation from the other. Flinging down his knife and fork, as if he estimated those instruments very slightly, now that their services were useless, and pushing his plate briskly from him, he demanded with an anxious air—"Can any gentleman inform me what chance there is of the Signora coming?"

"No news to-day," said the Baron, with a mournful look; "I'm almost in despair;—what do you think of the last notes that have been interchanged?"

"Very little chance," said the Chevalier de Bœffleurs, shaking his head; "really these burghers, with all their affected enthusiasm, have managed the business exceedingly bad. No opera can possibly succeed, that is not conducted by a committee of noblemen."

"Certainly!" said the Baron; "we're sure then to have the best singers, and be in the Gazette the same season."

"Which is much better, I think, Von Konigstein, than paying our bills, and receiving no pleasure."

"But these burghers," continued the Baron; "these clumsy burghers, with their affected enthusiasm, as you well observe, who could have contemplated such novices in diplomacy! Whatever may be the issue, I can at least lay my head upon my pillow, and feel that I have done my duty. Did not I, de Bœffleurs, first place the negociation on a basis of acknowledged feasibility and mutual benefit? Who drew the protocol, I should like to know? Who baffled the intrigues of the English Minister, the Lord Amelius Fitz-fudge Boroughby? Who sat up one whole night with the Signora's friend, the Russian Envoy, Baron Squallonoff—and who was it that first arranged about the extra chariot?"—and here the representative of a first rate German Power looked very much

like a resigned patriot, who feels that he deserves a ribbon.

"No doubt of it, my dear von Konigstein," echoed the French Chargé d'Affaires, "and I think, whatever may be the result, that I too may look back to this negociation with no ungratified feelings. Had the arrangement been left as I had wished, merely to the ministers of the Great Powers, I am confident that the Signora would have been singing this night in our Opera House."

"What is the grand point of difference at present?" asked the Austrian.

"A most terrific one," said the Baron; "the lady demanded six-and-thirty covers, two tables, two carriages, one of which I arranged should be a chariot; that at least the town owes to me; and, let me see, what else? merely a town mansion and establishment. Exerting myself day and night, these terms were, at length, agreed to by the municipality, and the lady was to ride over from Darmstadt to sign and seal. In the course of her ride, she took a cursed fancy to the country villa of a great Jew banker, and since that mo-

ment the arrangement has gone off. We have offered her every thing — the commandant's country castle — his lady's country farm — the villa of the director of the Opera—the retreat of our present prima donna—all, all in vain. We have even hinted at a temporary repose in a neighbouring royal residence — but all, all useless. The banker and the Signora are equally intractable, and Frankfort is in despair."

"She ought to have signed and sealed at Darmstadt," said the Count very indignantly.

"To be sure!—they should have closed upon her caprice, and taken her when she was in the fancy."

"Talking of Opera girls," commenced the Polish Prince, "I remember the Countess Katszinski—"

"Your Highness has nothing upon your plate," quickly retorted the Baron, who was in no humour for a story.

"Nothing more, I thank you," continued the Prince: "as I was saying, I remember the Countess Katszinski—"

"Mr. Brinkel!" announced the Chasseur;

and the entrance of a very singular looking personage saved the company from the Pole's long story.

Mr. Brinkel was a celebrated picture-dealer. He was a man about the middle size, with keen black eyes, a sharp nose rather unduly inclining to his right cheek, and which somewhat singular contortion was, perhaps, occasioned by an habitual and sardonic grin which constantly illuminated his features, and lit up his shining dark brown face, which was of much the same tint as one of his own varnished, "deep-toned" modern antiques. There were odd stories about, respecting Mr. Brinkel, and his "undoubted originals," in which invaluable pieces of property he alone professed to deal. But the Baron von Konigstein was, at any rate, not one of Mr. Brinkel's victims; and his Excellency was among the rare few, whom a picture-dealer knows it is in vain to attempt to take in: he was an amateur who thoroughly understood art, one of the rarest characters in existence. The Baron and Brinkel were, however, great friends; and at the present moment the picture-dealer was as-

sisting the diplomatist in the accomplishment of a very crafty and splendid plan. Baron von Konigstein, for various reasons, which shall now be nameless, was generally in want of money. Now the Baron, tired with his perpetual shifts, determined to make a fortune at one great coup. He had been in England, and was perfectly aware of the rising feeling for the arts which at the present moment daily flourishes in this country. The Baron was generous enough to determine materially to assist in the formation of our national taste. He was, himself, forming at a cheap rate a very extensive collection of original pictures, which he intended to sell at an enormous price, to the National Gallery. Brinkel, in order to secure the *entrée* of the Baron's room, which afforded various opportunities of getting off his "undoubted" originals on English and Russian travellers, was in return assisting the minister in his great operation, and acted as his general agent in the affair, on which he was also to get a respectable commission. This business was, of course, altogether a close secret.

And now, before Mr. Brinkel opens his mouth, I may, perhaps, be allowed to say a few words upon a subject, in which we are all interested. We are now forming, at great expense, and with greater anxiety, a National Gallery. What is the principal object of such an Institution? Doubtless to elevate the productions of our own school, by affording our artists an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the works of the great masters who have preceded them. Why, then, have we deviated from the course which has been pursued in the formation of all other National Galleries? There we shall see arranged in chronological order, specimens of the art in all ages, from the period in which Cimabue rescued it from the Greek painters, unto the present time. The excellent is doubtless to be conceived in the study of the excellent; but we should always remember, that excellence is relative; and that to the philosopher, the frescos of Masaccio, are perhaps more marvellous than the frescos of the Vatican. Introduce a young and inexperienced painter to the Assumption of Titian,

the Madonna della Pietà of Guido, the Leo of Raffael, the St. Jerome of Domenichino; and, instead of being incited and inspired, he will leave the chamber in despair. But, before he witnesses these miracles, let him trace on the walls of the gallery, the history of his art. Let him view the first hazardous efforts of the inexperienced, wavering, and timid pencil, depicting mummies, rather than men—sticks, rather than trees: let him view the unrelieved surface—the ill-proportioned extremities—the harsh and unsubdued tints; then let him watch perspective, stealing into the back-ground; let him witness the attenuated forms falling into graceless, but energetic groups; let him admire the first deception of chiaro 'scuro; then bring him to the correct design, the skilful foreshortening, the exact extremities; to the rounded limb—to the breathing mouth—to the kindled eye—to the moving group! Add to these all the magic of colour, and lo! a grand picture. We stand before the work with admiring awe; forgetting the means in the result; the artist, in the creator.

Thus gradually, I repeat, should our young artist be introduced to the great masters, whom then the wise pride of human nature would incite him to imitate. Then too, he would feel that to become a great artist, he must also become a great student; that no sudden inspiration produced the virgins of Raffael; that, by slow degrees, by painful observation, by diligent comparison, by frequent experiment, by frequent failure, by the experience of many styles, the examination of all schools, the scholar of Perugino won for himself a name, than which no one is more deeply graven on Fame's eternal tablets.

For half the sum that we are giving for a suspicious Corregio, the young English artist would be able to observe all this, and the efforts of the early Germans to boot. I make these observations with no disposition to disparage the management of our gallery; nor in that carping humour, which some think it safe to assume, when any new measure is proposed, or is being carried into execution. I know the difficulties that the Directors have to contend with.

I know the greater difficulties that await them; and I have made these observations, because I believe there is a due disposition, in the proper quarter, to attend to honest suggestions; and because I feel, that the true interests of the Arts, have, at this present time, in our Monarch, a steady, a sincere, and powerful advocate; one, who in spite of the disheartening opposition of vulgar clamour, and uneducated prejudice, has done more in a short reign for the patronage of the fine Arts, than all the dynasties of all the Medicis, Roman and Florentine, together. And now for Mr. Brinkel.

"My dear Baron!" commenced the picture-dealer; and here seeing strangers he pulled up, in order to take a calm view of the guests, and see whether there were any unpleasant faces among them; any gentleman to whom he had sold a Leonardo da Vinci, or a Salvator Rosa. All looking very strange, and extremely amiable, Mr. Brinkel felt reassured and proceeded.

"My dear Baron! merely a few words."

"Oh, my dear Brinkel!—proceed—proceed."

"Another time; your Excellency is engaged at present."

"My dear Brinkel! before these gentlemen you may say any thing."

"Your Excellency's so kind!" continued Mr. Brinkel, though with a hesitating voice, as if he thought that when the nature of the communication was known, the Baron might repent his over confidence. "Your Excellency's so kind!"

"My dear little Rembrandt, you may really say *any thing*."

"Well then," continued he, half hesitating, and half in a whisper; "may it please your Excellency, I merely stepped in to say, that I am secretly, but credibly informed, that there is a man just arrived from Italy, with a marble Pietà of Michel Angelo, stolen from a church in Genoa. The fact is not yet known, even to the police; and long before the Sardinian minister can apply for the acquirer's apprehension, he will be safely stowed in one of my cellars."

"A marble Pietà! by Michel Angelo," exclaimed the Prince, with great eagerness. The Polish nobleman had a commission from the imperial Viceroy of his country, to make purchases of all exquisite specimens of art that he could meet with; as the Imperial government was very desirous of reforming the taste of the nation in matters of art, which indeed was in a particularly depraved state. Caricatures had been secretly circulated in the highest circles of Warsaw and Wilna, in which the Emperor and his ministers did not look quite as dignified as when shrouded in the sacred sanctuary of the Kremlin; and although the knout, the wheel, and Siberia, suppressed these little intemperances for the moment, still it was imagined by the prime minister, who chanced to be a philosopher, that the only method of permanent prevention was directing the public taste to the study of the beautiful; and that therefore the only mode of saving the Sovereign from being squibbed, was the formation of a national gallery. Ours therefore is not the only infant institute.

"A marble Pietà, by Michel Angelo!" exclaimed the Prince; "but a great price, I suppose, demanded?"

"Dear—but cheap;" oracularly answered Mr. Brinkel; and the sinistral fore-finger was significantly applied to the left side of his nose.

"I confess I am no extravagant admirer of Michel Angelo," said the Baron. "In the sacred shades of Santa Croce, Sculpture, Painting, and Architecture mourn him as their lost master. Poetry might have been added to the charming Sisters. But in all these glorious arts, though his performances were remarkable, they were not miraculous; and I look in vain for any production of Michel Angelo, which *per se* stamps him as a master spirit.

"It was his custom to treat sculpture as his profession, and in his profession he has left scarcely one finished work. The tombs of the Medicis are not completed, and although there is a mysterious and undefinable moral in his "Night and Day," which may attract the contemplative, and interest the poet, yet I imagine few, who have preconceived that monument

from the written descriptions, have looked on the original without disappointment. His Moses,—and for a moment I will grant that the legislator is as sublime as his warmest admirers maintain,—is only one finished figure of a monument, in which it was to have been not the most remarkable. But what, if this statue be only a kindred personification of the same conception which he has depicted in the brawny prophets of the Sistine chapel, where it would seem that the artist had mistaken contortion for inspiration, and largeness of stature for dilation of soul! His marble Pietàs and Madonnas unfinished, abound in the Italian churches; and though I grant a striking simplicity is often observable in the countenances of his virgins, yet that simplicity is often severe, and sometimes sullen. We look in vain for the subdued loveliness of the mother of God—for that celestial resignation which is not akin to despair. As for the corpse, it might suit the widow's child, or the deceased Lazarus; and if not always absolutely vulgar, the face is at best but that of a young, and not very intellectual Rabbi. If we turn from sacred

subjects to ancient mythology, I cannot forget that Michel Angelo was the first artist, who dared to conceive a god as less than a man; and in his "Drunken Bacchus," presented us with the sovereign of the grape, as the slave of his own subject, in a position too clumsy for a Faun, and too dull for a Silenus!

"Although sculpture was the profession of Michel Angelo, he is still more esteemed by his admirers as a painter. Notwithstanding Sir Joshua Reynolds ranks him even above Raffael, it seems now pretty well understood that his fame as a painter must depend upon his Roman frescos, and his *one* oil painting—the Holy Family at Florence. Whether this painting really be in oil is doubtful, but that is of little moment. I will only ask, what mind unprejudiced by the doctrines, and uncontaminated by the babble of schools, has looked upon that boasted treasure of the Tribune, with any other feeling except disgust? Where is the divinity of the boy? Where the inspiration of the mother? Where the proud felicity of the human husband?

"Of fresco-painting, Michel Angelo was confessedly ignorant, and once threw down the brush in disgust at his own incompetence. The theorist of art still finds some plan, and order, lurking in the inexplicable arrangement of the Sistine ceiling; but while he consoles himself for the absence of the more delightful effects of art, by conjuring up a philosophical arrangement of the prophets, and a solution of the dark mysteries of theocracy, he turns in silence from the walls, gloomy with the frightless purgatory, and the unexhilarating paradise of 'The last Judgment;' where the Gothic conceptions of the middle ages are again served up in the favourite temple of modern Rome, and in a manner in which crude composition seems only to be exceeded by confused arrangement—in which the distracted eye turns to a thousand points, and is satisfied by none—wearied with tints, which though monotonous, are not subdued, and which possessing none of the attractions of colour, seem cursed with all its faults.

"Michel Angelo was not educated as an

architect; but an Italian, and a man of genius, may become a great architect, even without an education. Let us briefly examine his works. The domestic architecture of Florence is due to him; and if we complain of palaces, which look like prisons, and lament the perpetual presence of rustic bossages, we are told that the plans of Michel Angelo were dictated by the necessities of the times; and that, in his age, it was absolutely requisite that every palace should be prepared to become a fortress. If this be admitted as a valid excuse for the absence of beauty, it is against all principles of logic, that, because in these structures beauty was incompatible with safety, Michel Angelo could therefore have conceived the beautiful. In the chapel of the Medicis, we in vain look for the master;— where is that happy union of the sciences of the harmony of proportion, and the harmony of combination, which mark the great architect! where the harmonious whole consisting of parts beautiful in detail, and unobtrusive in effect! We see only a dungeon, at once clumsy and confined.

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"If we turn from Florence to Rome, who is there to defend the complexities of the Capitoline Galleries, and the absurdities of the Porta Pia? We approach St. Peter's:—although the work of many artists, the design of Michel Angelo has, on the whole, been very faithfully adhered to. That St. Peter's is magnificent, who can deny?—but how could such a mass of stone, and masonry, and architectural embellishment, such a blaze of gilding, marbles, and mosaics, be otherwise than magnificent? We must not be deceived by the first impression of a general effect which could not be avoided. It is acknowledged that this church, which is the largest in Christendom; which required so many years for its erection; which exhausted the Papal treasures, and endangered the Papal dominion; affects the mind of the entering stranger, neither with its sublimity, nor its grandeur; and presents no feature which would lead him to suppose, that he was standing in the most celebrated temple in Europe. All our travellers and writers, who have alike experienced disappointment on entering this famous

building, have attempted to account for this effect, by attributing the cause to the exactness of the proportions. But this is like excusing a man's ignorance, by assuring you that he has received a regular education. If exactness of proportion produce poverty of effect, exactness of proportion ceases to be a merit; but is this true? What lover of Palladio can deny that it is the business of the great architect to produce striking and chaste effects, from poor and limited materials; and that exactness of proportion satisfying the mind, and not forcing it to ask for *more*, does in fact make that which is less appear greater, and that which is great, immense.

"But if I mention the faults of Michel Angelo, I am bid to remember the early period of art in which he lived; I am reminded of the mean elevations of those who preceded him—of the tone which he gave to the conceptions of his successors. Yet many celebrated sculptors were his contemporaries, and surely Leonardo da Vinci was not the scholar of his genius. But in painting, especially, he was preceded by Fra Bartolomeo, a miraculous artist;—who, while in his

meek Madonnas he has only been equalled by Raffael, has produced in his St. Mark—his Job—and his Isaiah—creations which might have entitled him to the panegyrics which Posterity has so liberally bestowed upon the sculptor of Moses, and the painter of the Sistine Chapel.

"In architecture, I will not notice Brunelleschi; but let me mention this astonishing fact:—San Michele was born only nine or ten years after Michel Angelo, and as he died a few years before him, may be considered his exact contemporary. While the chapel of the Medicis was erected at Florence, at Verona, in the chapel of the Pellegrini, San Michele was reproducing ancient beauty, in combinations unknown to the antique. While the barbaric absurdities of the Porta Pia disgraced the capital of the Papal state, San Michele produced in the Porta Stupa a structure worthy of ancient Rome. And while Michel Angelo was raising palaces for his Florentine contemporaries, whose dark and rugged elevations are to be excused, on account of the necessity of their being impregnable to the assaults of popular tumult, the

streets of Verona, the constant seat of sedition, were filling under the direction of San Michele, with numberless palaces, which, while they defended their owners alike among the dangers of civil broils and foreign invasion, at the same time presented elevations which, for their varied beauty, and classic elegance, have only been equalled by Palladio!"

Nothing is more delightful than to hear the sound of our own voice. The Baron's lecture was rather long, but certainly unlike most other lecturers, he understood his subject. Before Vivian could venture an observation in defence of the great Florentine, the door opened, and Ernstorff handed a dispatch to the Baron, recommending it to his Excellency's particular attention.

"Business, I suppose," said the Plenipotentiary: "it may wait till to morrow."

"From M. Clarionet, your Excellency."

"From M. Clarionet!" eagerly exclaimed the Baron, and tore open the epistle. "Gentlemen! gentlemen! gentlemen! congratulate me —congratulate yourselves—congratulate Frank-

fort—such news—it is really too much for me," and the diplomatist, overcome, leant back in his chair.—" She is ours, Salvinski! she is ours, Von Altenburgh! she is ours, my dear de Bœffleurs! Grey, you 're the happiest fellow in Christendom; the Signora has signed and sealed —all is arranged—she sings to-night! What a fine spirited body is this Frankfort municipality! what elevation of soul! what genuine enthusiasm!—eh! de Bœffleurs!"

" Most genuine!" exclaimed the Chevalier, who hated German music with all his heart, and was now humming an air from the Dame Blanche.

" But mind, my dear fellows—this is a secret, a cabinet secret—the municipality are to have the gratification of announcing the event to the city in a public decree—it is but fair. I feel that I have only to hint, to secure your silence."

At this moment, with a thousand protestations of secrecy, the party broke up, each hastening to have the credit of first spreading the joyful intelligence through their circles, and of depriving the Frankfort senate of their hard-

earned gratification. The Baron, who was in high spirits, ordered the carriage to drive Vivian round the ramparts, where he was to be introduced to some of the most fashionable beauties, previous to the evening triumph. Mr. Brinkel, disappointed at present of increasing, through the assistance of the Polish Prince, any collection in the North, directed his subtle steps up another flight of the staircase of the Roman Emperor, where lodged an English gentleman, for whom Mr. Brinkel had a very exquisite *morçeau;* having received the night before from Florence a fresh consignment of Carlo Dolces.

CHAPTER III.

VIVIAN passed a week very agreeably at Frankfort. In the Baron and his friends he found the companions that he had need of; their conversation and pursuits diverted his mind without engaging his feelings, and allowed him no pause to think. There were moments, indeed, when he found in the Baron a companion neither frivolous nor uninstructive. His Excellency had travelled in most countries, and had profited by his travels. His taste for the fine arts was equalled by his knowledge of them; and his acquaintance with many of the most eminent men of Europe enriched his conversation with a variety of anecdotes, to which his lively talents did ample justice. He seemed

fond, at times, of showing Vivian that he was not a mere artificial man of the world, destitute of all feelings, and thinking only of himself: he recurred with satisfaction to moments of his life, when his passions had been in full play; and, while he acknowledged the errors of his youth with candour, he excused them with grace. In short, Vivian and he became what the world calls *friends*; that is to say, they were men who had no objection to dine in each other's company, provided the dinner were good; assist each other in any scrape, provided no particular personal responsibility were incurred by the assistant; and live under the same roof, provided each were master of his own time. Vivian and the Baron, indeed, did more than this—they might have been described as *very particular friends*—for his Excellency had persuaded our hero to accompany him for the summer to the Baths of Ems, a celebrated German watering place, situated in the duchy of Nassau, in the vicinity of the Rhine.

On the morrow they were to commence their journey. The fair of Frankfort, which had

now lasted nearly a month, was at its close. A bright sun-shiny afternoon was stealing into twilight, when Vivian escaping from the principal street, and the attractions of the Braunfels, or chief shops under the Exchange, directed his steps to some of the more remote and ancient streets. In crossing a little square, his attention was excited by a crowd, which had assembled round a conjuror; who from the top of a small cart, which he had converted into a stage, was haranguing, in front of a green curtain, an audience with great fervency, and apparently with great effect; at least Vivian judged so, from the loud applauses which constantly burst forth. The men pressed nearer, shouted, and clapped their hands; and the anxious mothers struggled to lift their brats higher in the air, that they might early form a due conception of the powers of magic; and learn that the maternal threats which were sometimes extended to them at home, were not mere idle boasting. Altogether the men with their cocked hats, stiff holiday coats, and long pipes; the women with their glazed gowns of bright fancy patterns, close lace caps, or richly chased silver head-

gear; and the children with their gaping mouths and long heads of hair, offered very quaint studies for a Flemish painter. Vivian became also one of the audience, and not an uninterested one.

The appearance of the conjuror was very peculiar. He was not much more than five feet high, but so slightly formed, that he reminded you rather of the boy, than the dwarf. The upper part of his face was even delicately moulded; his sparkling black eyes became his round forehead, which was not too much covered by his short glossy black hair; his complexion was clear, but quite olive; his nose was very small and straight, and contrasted singularly with his enormous mouth, the thin bluish lips of which were seldom closed, and consequently did not conceal his large square teeth, which, though very white, were set apart, and were so solid that they looked almost like double teeth. This enormous mouth, which was supported by large jawbones, attracted the attention of the spectator so keenly that it was some time before you observed the prodigious size of the ears, which also adorned this

extraordinary countenance. The costume of this singular being was not less remarkable than his natural appearance. He wore a complete under-dress of pliant leather, which fitted close up to his throat, and down to his wrists and ankles, where it was clasped with large fastenings either of gold or some gilt material. This, with the addition of a species of hussar jacket of green cloth, which was quite unadorned, with the exception of its vivid red lining, was the sole covering of the conjuror; who, with a light cap and feather in his hand, was now haranguing the spectators. The object of his discourse was a panegyric of himself, and a satire on all other conjurors. He was the only conjuror—the real conjuror—a worthy descendant of the magicians of old.

"Were I to tell that broad-faced Heer," continued the conjuror, "who is now gaping opposite to me, that this rod is the rod of Aaron, mayhap he would call me a liar; yet were I to tell him that he was the son of his father, he would not think it wonderful! And yet, can he prove it? My friends, if I am a

liar, the whole world is a liar—and yet any one of you who'll go and proclaim that on the Braunfels, will get his skull cracked. Every truth is not to be spoken, and every lie is not to be punished. I've told you that it's better for you to spend your money in seeing my tricks, than it is in swigging schnaps in the chimney corner; and yet, my friends, this may be a lie. I've told you that the profits of this whole night shall be given to some poor and worthy person in this town; and perhaps I shall give them to myself. What then! I shall speak the truth; and you will perhaps crack my skull. Is this a reward for truth? Oh, generation of vipers! My friends, what is truth? who can find it in Frankfort? Suppose I call upon you, Mr. Baker, and sup with you this evening; you will receive me as a neighbourly man should, tell me to make myself at home, and do as I like. Is it not so? I see you smile, as if my visit would make you bring out one of the bottles of your best Asmanshausen!"

Here the crowd laughed out; for we are

always glad when there is any talk of another's hospitality being put to the test, although we stand no chance of sharing in the entertainment ourselves. The baker looked foolish, as all men singled out in a crowd do.

"Well, well," continued the conjuror; "I've no doubt his wine would be as ready as your tobacco, Mr. Smith; or a wafila from your basket, my honest Cake-seller;" and so saying, with a peculiarly long thin wand, the conjuror jerked up the basket of an itinerant and shouting Pastry-cook, and immediately began to thrust the contents into his mouth with a rapidity ludicrously miraculous. The laugh now burst out again, but the honest baker joined in it this time with an easy spirit.

"Be not disconcerted, my little custard-monger; if thou art honest, thou shalt prosper. Did I not say that the profits of this night were for the most poor, and the most honest? If thy stock in trade were in thy basket, my raspberry-puff, verily you are not now the richest here; and so, therefore, if your character be a fair one—that is to say, if you only

cheat five times a-day, and give a tenth of your cheatery to the poor, you shall have the benefit. I ask you again, what is truth? If I sup with the baker, and he tells me to do what I like with all that is his, and I kiss his wife, he will kick me out; yet to kiss his wife might be my pleasure, if her breath were sweet. I ask you again, what is truth? Truth they say lies in a well; but perhaps this is a lie. How do we know that truth is not in one of these two boxes?" asked the conjuror, placing his cap on his head, and holding one small snuff-box to a tall savage-looking one-eyed Bohemian, who, with a comrade, had walked over from the Austrian garrison at Mentz.

"I see but one box," growled the soldier.

"It is because thou hast only one eye, friend; open the other, and thou shalt see two," said the conjuror, in a slow malicious tone, with his neck extended, and his hand with the hateful box outstretched in it.

"Now, by our black lady of Altoting, I'll soon stop thy prate, chitterling!" bellowed the enraged Bohemian.

"Murder! murder! murder!—the protection of the free city against the Emperor of Austria, the King of Bohemia, Hungary, and Lombardy!" and the knave retreated to the very extremity of the stage, and affecting the most agitating fear, hid himself behind the green curtain, from a side of which his head was alone visible, or rather an immense red tongue, which wagged in all shapes at the unlucky soldier, except when it retired to the interior of his mouth, to enable him to reiterate "*Murder!*" and invoke the privileges of the free city of Frankfort.

When the soldier was a little cooled, the conjuror again came forward; and, having moved his small magical table to a corner, and lit two tapers, one of which he placed at each side of the stage, he stripped off his hussar jacket, and began to imitate a monkey; an animal which, by the faint light, in his singular costume, he very much resembled. How amusing were his pranks! He first plundered a rice plantation, and then he cracked cocoa nuts; then he washed his face, and arranged his toilet with his right

paw; and finally, he ran a race with his own tail, which humorous appendage to his body was very wittily performed for the occasion, by a fragment of an old tarred rope. His gambols were so diverting, that they even extracted applause from his enemy the one-eyed serjeant; and, emboldened by the acclamations, from monkeys the conjuror began to imitate men. He first drank like a Dutchman, and having reeled round with a thousand oaths to the manifold amusement of the crowd, he suddenly began to smoke like a Prussian. Nothing could be more admirable than the look of complacent and pompous stolidity with which he accompanied each puff of his cigar. The applause was continued; and the one-eyed Bohemian serjeant, delighted at the ridicule which was heaped on his military rival, actually threw the mimic some groschen.

"Keep your pence, friend," said the conjuror; "you 'll soon owe me more; we have not yet closed accounts. My friends, I have drank like a Dutchman; I have smoked like a Prussian; and now—I will eat like an Austrian!"—and

here the immense mouth of the actor seemed distended even a hundred degrees bigger, while with gloating eyes and extended arms, he again set to at the half-emptied wafila basket of the unhappy pastry-cook.

"Now, by our black Lady of Altoting, thou art an impudent varlet!" growled the Austrian soldier.

"You are losing your temper again," retorted the glutton, with his mouth full; "how difficult you are to please!—Well, then, if the Austrians may not be touched, what say you to a Bohemian—a tall one-eyed Bohemian serjeant, with an appetite like a hog, and a liver like a lizard?"

"Now, by our black Lady of Altoting, this is too much!" and the frantic soldier sprang at the conjuror.

"Hold him! hold him!" cried Vivian Grey; for the mob, frightened at the soldier, gave way.

"There is a gentle's voice under a dark cloak!" cried the conjuror; "but I want no assistance;" and so saying, with a dexterous spring, the conjuror leapt over the heads of two or three staring children, and lighted on the

nape of the serjeant's gigantic neck; placing his forefingers behind each of the soldier's ears, he threatened to slit them immediately, if he were not quiet. The serjeant's companion, of course, came to his rescue, but Vivian engaged him, and attempted to arrange matters. "My friends, my friends, surely a gay word at a *kermis* is not to meet with military punishment! What is the use of living in the free city of Frankfort, or, indeed, in any other city, if jokes are to be answered with oaths, and a light laugh met with a heavy blow? Avoid bloodshed, if possible; but stand by the conjuror. His business is gibes and jests, and this is the first time that I ever saw Merry Andrew arrested. Come, come, my good fellows!" said he to the soldiers, "we had better be off: men so important as you and I should not be spectators of these mummeries." The Austrians, who understood Vivian's compliment literally, were not sorry to make a dignified retreat; particularly as the mob, encouraged by Vivian's interference, began to show fight. Vivian also took his departure as soon as he could possibly steal off unnoticed;

but not before he had been thanked by the conjuror.

"I knew there was gentle blood under that cloak! If you like to see the Mystery of the Crucifixion, with the Resurrection, and real fire-works, it begins at eight o'clock, and you shall be admitted gratis. I knew there was gentle blood under that cloak, and some day or other, when your Highness is in distress, you shall not want the aid of Essper George!"

CHAPTER IV.

It was late in the evening, when a britchka stopped at the post-house of Coblentz. M. Maas, whom all English travellers must remember, for all must have experienced his genuine kindness, greeted its two inmates with his usual hospitality; but regretted that, as his house was very full, his Excellency must have the condescension to sup in the public-room. The passage-boat from Bingen had just arrived; and a portly judge from the Danube, a tall, gaunt Prussian officer, a sketching English artist, two University students, and three or four travelling cloth-merchants, chiefly returning from Frankfort-fair, were busily occupied at a long table in the centre of the room, at an ample banquet, in which sour-crout, cherry soup, and very savory

sausages were not wanting. So keen were the appetites, and so intense the attention of these worthies, that the entrance of the new comers was scarcely noticed; and the Baron and his friend seated themselves very quietly at a small table in the corner of the room, where they waited with due patience for the arrival of one of Monsieur Maas' exquisite little suppers; although hunger, more than once, nearly induced them to join the table of the boat's-crew; but as the Baron facetiously observed, a due terror of the Prussian officer, who, the moment they arrived, took care to help himself to every dish at table, and a proper respect for Ernstorff prevented a consummation which they devoutly wished for.

For half an hour nothing was heard but the sound of crashing jaws, and of rattling knives and forks. How singular is the sight of a dozen hungry individuals intent upon their prey! what a noisy silence! A human voice was at length heard. It proceeded from the fat judge from the Danube. He was a man at once convivial, dignified, and economical: he had not spoke for two minutes before his character was evident to

every person in the room, although he flattered himself that his secret purpose was concealed from all. Tired with the thin Moselle which M. Maas gratuitously allowed to the table, the convivial judge from the Danube wished to comfort himself with a glass of more generous liquor; aware of the price of a bottle of good Rudesheimer, the economical judge from the Danube was desirous of forming a co-partnership with one or two gentlemen in the bottle; still more aware of his exalted situation, the dignified judge from the Danube felt it did not become him to appear in the eyes of any one as an unsuccessful suppliant.

"This Moselle is very thin," observed the judge, shaking his head.

"Very fair table-wine, I think," said the artist, re-filling his tumbler, and then proceeding with his sketch, which was a rough likeness, in black chalk, of the worthy magistrate himself.

"Very good wine, I think," swore the Prussian, taking the bottle. With the officer there was certainly no chance.

The cloth-merchants mixed even this thin Moselle with water, and therefore they could hardly be looked to as boon companions; and the students were alone left. A German student is no flincher at the bottle, although he generally drinks beer. These gentry, however, were no great favourites with the magistrate, who was a loyal man, of regular habits, and no encourager of brawls, duels, and other still more disgraceful outrages; to all which abominations, besides drinking beer and chewing tobacco, the German student is most remarkably addicted: but in the present case, what was to be done? He offered the nearest a pinch of snuff, as a mode of commencing his acquaintance, and cultivating his *complaisance*. The German student dug his thumb into the box, and with the additional aid of the fore-finger sweeping out half its contents, growled out something like thanks, and then drew up in his seat, as if he had too warmly encouraged the impertinent intrusion of a Philistine, to whom he had never been introduced.

The cloth-merchant ceasing from sipping his

meek liquor, and taking out of his pocket a letter, from which he tore off the back, carefully commenced collecting with his fore-finger the particles of dispersed snuff in a small pyramid, which, when formed, was dexterously slided into the paper, then folded up and put into his pocket; the prudent merchant contenting himself for the moment with the refreshment which was afforded to his senses by the truant particles which had remained in his nail.

"Kelner!"—never call a German waiter *Garçon*, or else you'll stand a chance of going supperless to-bed;—"Kelner! a bottle of Rudesheimer!" bellowed the convivial judge from the Danube; "and if any gentleman or gentlemen would like to join me, they may;" added the economical judge from the Danube, in a more subdued tone. No one answered, and the bottle was put down. The judge slowly poured out the bright yellow fluid into a tall bell glass, adorned with a beautiful and encircling wreath of vine leaves: he held the glass a moment before the lamp, for his eye to

dwell with still greater advantage on the transparent radiancy of the contents; and then deliberately pouring them down his throat, and allowing them to dwell a moment on his palate, he uttered an emphatic "*bah!*" and sucking in his breath, leant back in his chair. The student immediately poured out a glass from the same bottle, and drank it off. The dignified judge from the Danube gave him a look;—the economical judge from the Danube blessed himself that though his boon companion was a brute, still he would lessen the expense of the bottle, which nearly amounted to a day's pay; and the convivial judge from the Danube again filled his glass—but this was merely to secure his fair portion. He saw the student was a rapid drinker; and, although he did not like to hurry his own enjoyment, he thought it most prudent to keep his glass well stored by his side.

"I hope your Highnesses have had a pleasant voyage," halloed out a man, entering the room very rapidly as he spoke; and deliberately walking up to the table, he pushed between two

of the cloth merchants, who quietly made way; and then placing a small square box before him, he immediately opened it, and sweeping aside all the dishes and glasses which surrounded him, he began to fill their places with cups, balls, rings, and other mysterious-looking matters, which generally accompany a conjuror.

"I hope your Highnesses have had a pleasant voyage. I've been thinking of you all the day. (Here the cups were arranged.) Next to myself, I'm interested for my friends. (Here the rice was sprinkled.) I came from Fairy-land this morning. (Here the trick was executed.) Will any gentleman lend me a handkerchief? Now, Sir, tie any knot you choose:—tighter—tighter—tight as you can—tight as you can:—now pull! —Why, Sir, where 's your knot?" Here most of the company good-naturedly laughed at a trick which had amused them before a hundred times. But the dignified judge from the Danube had no taste for such trivial amusements; and, besides, the convivial judge from the Danube thought that all this noise spoilt the pleasure of his wine, and prevented him

from catching the flavour of his Rudesheimer. Moreover, the judge from the Danube was not in a very good humour. The German student appeared to have very little idea of the rules and regulations of a fair partnership; for not only did he not regulate his draughts by the moderate example of his bottle companion, but actually filled the glass of his University friend, and even offered the precious green flask to his neighbour, the cloth-merchant. That humble individual modestly refused the proffer. The very unexpected circumstance of having his health drank by a stranger seemed alone to have produced a great impression upon him; and adding a little more water to his already diluted potation, he bowed most reverently to the student, who, in return, did not notice him. All these little circumstances prevented the judge from the Danube from being in his usual condescending and amiable humour, and therefore the judge from the Danube did not laugh at the performances of our friend Essper George: for I need hardly mention that the conjuror was no other than that quaint per-

sonage. His ill-humour did not escape the lord of the cups and balls; who, as was his custom, immediately began to torment him.

"Will your Highness choose a card?" asked the magician of the judge, with a most humble look.

This was too much for the magistrate.

"No, Sir!"

Essper George looked very penitent, as if he felt he had taken a great liberty by his application; and so to compensate for his incorrect behaviour, he asked the magistrate whether he would have the goodness to lend him his watch. The judge was very irate, and determined to give the intruder a set down.

"No, Sir; I am not one of those who can be amused by tricks that his grandfather knew."

"Grandfather!" shrieked Essper; "what a wonderful grandfather your's must have been! All my tricks are fresh from Fairy-land this morning. Grandfather, indeed! Pray, is this your grandfather?" and here the conjuror, leaning over the table, with a rapid catch drew out

from the fat paunch of the judge, a long, grinning wooden figure, with great staring eyes, and the parrot nose of a pulcinello. The laugh which followed this humorous specimen of sleight-of-hand was loud, long, and universal. The judge lost his temper; and Essper George took the opportunity of the confusion to drink off the glass of Rudesheimer, which stood, as we have mentioned, ready-charged at the magistrate's elbow.

The kelner now went round to collect the money of the various guests who had partaken of the boat-supper; and, of course, charged the judge extra for his ordered bottle, bowing at the same time very low, as was proper to so good a customer. These little attentions at inns encourage expenditure. The judge tried at the same time the bottle, which he found empty, and applied to his two boon companions for their quota; but the students affected a sort of brutal surprise at any one having the presumption to imagine that they were going to pay their proportion; and flinging down the money for their own supper on the table, they

retired; the frantic magistrate, calling loudly for M. Maas, followed them out of the room.

Essper George stood moralizing at the table, and emptying every glass whose contents were not utterly drained; with the exception of the tumblers of the cloth-merchants, of whose liquor he did not approve.

"Dear me! poor man! to get only one glass out of his own bottle! I wish I hadn't taken his wine; it was rather sour. Ay! call—call away for M. Maas: threaten—threaten—threaten as you will. Your grandfather will not help you here. Blood out of a wall, and money out of a student come the same day.—Ah! is your Highness here?" said Essper, turning round to our two travellers with affected surprise, although he had observed them the whole time. "Is your Highness here? I've been looking for you through Frankfort this whole morning. *There!*—it will do for your glass. It is of chamois leather; and I made it myself, from a beast I caught last summer in the valley of the Rhone." So saying, he threw over Vivian's

neck a neat chain, or cord, of very curiously-worked leather.

"Who the devil's this, Grey?" asked the Baron.

"A funny knave, whom I once saved from a thrashing, or something of the kind, which I do him the justice to say he well deserved."

"Who the devil's this?" said Essper George. "Why that's exactly the same question I myself asked when I saw a tall, pompous, proud fellow, dressed like a peacock on a May morning, standing at the door just now. He looked as if he'd pass himself off for an ambassador at least; but I told him that if he got his wages paid, he was luckier than most servants. Was I right, your Excellency?"

"Poor Ernstorff!" said the Baron, laughing. "Yes; *he* certainly gets paid. Here,—you're a clever varlet; fill your glass."

"No, no, no, no wine—no wine.—Don't you hear the brawling, and nearly the bloodshed, which are going on up-stairs about a sour bottle of Rudesheimer? and here I see two gentles who have ordered the best wine merely to show that

they are masters and not servants of the green peacock—and lo! cannot get through a glass—Lord! lord! what is man? If my fat friend, and his grandfather, would but come down stairs again, here is liquor enough to make wine and water of the Danube; for he comes from thence by his accent. No, no, I'll have none of your wine; keep it to throw on the sandy floor, that the dust may not hurt your delicate shoes, nor dirt the hand of the gentleman in green and gold when he cleans them for you in the morning."

Here the Baron laughed again, and, as he bore his impertinence, Essper George immediately became polite.

"Does your mighty Highness go to Ems?"

"We hardly know, my friend."

"Oh! go there, gentlemen. I've tried them all—Aix-la-Chapelle, Spa, Wisbaden, Carlsbad, Pyrmont, every one of them; but what are these to Ems? there we all live in the same house, and eat from the same table. When there, I feel that you are all under my protection—I consider you all as my children. Besides, the country—how

delightful! the mountains—the valleys—the river—the woods—and then the company so select! no sharpers—no adventurers—no blacklegs: at Ems you can be taken in by no one except your intimate friend. Oh! go to Ems, go to Ems, by all means. I'd advise you, however, to send the gentleman in the cocked hat on before you to engage rooms; for I can assure you that you'll have a hard chance; the baths are very full."

"And how do you get there, Essper?" asked Vivian.

"Those are subjects on which I never speak," answered the conjuror, with a solemn air.

"But have you all your stock in trade with you, my good fellow? Where's the Mystery?"

"Sold, Sir, sold! I never keep to any thing long; Variety is the mother of Enjoyment. At Ems I shall not be a conjuror: but I never part with my box. It takes no more room than one of those medicine chests, which I dare say you've got with you in your carriage, to prop up your couple of shattered constitutions."

"By Jove! you're a merry impudent fel-

low," said the Baron; "and if you like to get up behind my britchka, you may."

"No, no, no; a thousand thanks to your mighty Highnesses, I carry my own box, and my own body, and I shall be at Ems to-morrow in time enough to receive your lordships."

CHAPTER V.

In a delightful valley of Nassau, formed by the picturesque windings of the Taunus mountains, and on the banks of the noisy river Lahn, stands an immense brick pile, of very irregular architecture, which nearly covers an acre of ground. This building was formerly a favourite palace of the ducal house of Nassau ; but for reasons which I cannot give, and which the reader will perhaps not require, the present Prince has thought proper to let out the former residence of his family, as an hotel for the accommodation of the company, who in the season frequent this, the most lovely spot in his lovely little Duchy. This extensive building contains two hundred and thirty rooms, and eighty

baths; and these apartments, which are under the management of an official agent, who lives in the "Princely Bathing House," for such is its present dignified title, are to be engaged at fixed prices, which are marked over the doors. All the rooms in the upper story of the Princely Bathing House open on, or are almost immediately connected with, a long corridor, which extends the whole length of the building. The ground floor, besides the space occupied by the baths, also affords a very spacious promenade, arched with stone, and surrounded with stalls, behind which are marshalled vendors of all the possible articles which can be required by the necessities of the frequenters of a watering-place. There you are greeted by the jeweller of the Palais Royal, and the *marchande de mode* of the Rue de la Paix; the printseller from Manheim, and the china-dealer from Dresden; and other little speculators in the various fancy articles which abound in Vienna, Berlin, Geneva, Basle, Strasburgh and Lausanne; such as pipes, costumes of Swiss peasantry, crosses of Mont-Blanc crystal, and all varieties of national *bijou-*

terie. All things may here be sold, save those which administer to the nourishment of the body, or the pleasure of the palate. Let not those of my readers, who have already planned a trip to the sweet vales of the Taunus, be frightened by this last rather alarming sentence. At Ems "eatables and drinkables" are excellent, and abounding; but all those are solely supplied by the *restaurateur*, who farms the monopoly from the Duke. This gentleman, who is a pupil of Beauvillier's, and who has conceived an exquisite *cuisine*, by adding to the lighter graces of French cookery something of the more solid virtues of the German, presides in a saloon of immense size and magnificent decoration; in which, during the season, upwards of three hundred persons frequent the Table d'Hôte. It is the etiquette at Ems, that, however distinguished, or however humble, the rank of the visitors, their fare and their treatment must be alike. In one of the most aristocratic countries in the world, the sovereign prince, and his tradesman subject, may be found seated in the morning at the same board, and eating from the

same dish; as in the evening they may be seen staking on the same colour at the gaming-table, and sharing in the same interest at the Redoute.

I have said that the situation of Ems was delightful. The mountains which form the valley are not, as in Switzerland, so elevated that they confine the air, or seem to impede the facility of breathing. In their fantastic forms, the picturesque is not lost in the monotonous; and in the rich covering of their various woods, the admiring eye finds, at the same time, beauty and repose. Opposite the ancient palace, on the banks of the Lahn, are the gardens. In these, in a neat pavilion, a band of excellent musicians seldom cease from enchanting the visitors by their execution of the most favourite specimens of German and Italian music. Numberless acacia arbours, and retired sylvan seats are here to be found, where the student, or the contemplative, may seek refuge from the noise of his more gay companions, and the tedium of eternal conversation. Here too, a *tête-à-tête* will seldom be disturbed; and in some species of *tête-à-têtes*, we all know how very necessary

and how very delightful are the perfumes of flowers, and the shade of secret trees, and the cooling sound of running waters. In these gardens also, are the billiard-room, and another saloon, in which each night meet, not merely those who are interested in the mysteries of *rouge et noir*, and the chances of *roulette;* but, in general, the whole of the company, male and female, who are frequenting the baths. In quitting the gardens for a moment, we must not omit mentioning the interesting booth of our friend the *restaurateur*, where coffee, clear and hot, exquisite *confitures*, delicious *liqueurs*, and particularly genuine maraschino of Zara are never wanting. Nor should I forget the glittering pennons of the gay boats which glide along the Lahn; nor the handsome donkies, who, with their white saddles and red bridles, seem not unworthy of the princesses whom they sometimes bear. The gardens, with an alley of lime-trees, which are farther on, near the banks of the river, afford easy promenades to the sick and debilitated; but the more robust and active need not fear monotony in the valley of the

Lahn. If they sigh for the champaign country, they can climb the wild passes of the encircling mountains, and from their tops enjoy the most magnificent views of the Rhine-land. There they may gaze on that mighty river, flowing through the prolific plain, which, at the same time, it nourishes and adorns,—bounded on each side by mountains of every form, clothed with wood, or crowned with castles. Or, if they fear the fatigues of the ascent, they may wander farther up the valley, and in the wild dells, romantic forests, and grey ruins of Stein and Nassau, conjure up the old times of feudal tyranny when the forest was the only free land; and he who outraged the laws, the only one who did not suffer from their authority.

Besides the Princely Bathing-House, I must mention, that there was another old and extensive building near it, which, in very full seasons, also accommodated visitors on the same system as the palace. At present, this adjoining building was solely occupied by a Russian Archduke, who had engaged it for the season.

Such is a faint description of Ems, a place

almost of unique character; for it is a watering-place with every convenience, luxury, and accommodation; and yet without shops, streets, or houses.

The Baron and Vivian were fortunate in finding rooms, for the Baths were very full; the extraordinary beauty of the weather having occasioned a very early season. They found themselves at the baths early on the morning after their arrival at Coblentz, and at three o'clock in the same day, had taken their places at the dinner-table in the great saloon. At the long table upwards of two hundred and fifty guests were assembled, of different nations, and very different characters. There was the cunning intriguing Greek, who served well his imperial master the Russian. The order of the patron saint of Moscow, and the glittering stars of other nations which sparkled on his green uniform, told how well he had laboured for the interest of all other countries except his own; but his clear pale complexion, his delicately-trimmed mustachios, his lofty forehead, his arched eye-brow, and his Eastern eye, recalled to the

traveller, in spite of his barbarian trappings, the fine countenances of the Ægean; and became a form which apparently might have struggled in Thermopylæ. Next to him was the Austrian diplomatist, the Sosia of all cabinets; in whose gay address, and rattling conversation you could hardly recognize the sophistical defender of unauthorized invasion, and the subtle inventor of Holy Alliances, and Imperial Leagues. Then came the rich usurer from Frankfort, or the prosperous merchant from Hamburgh; who, with his wife and daughters, were seeking some recreation from his flourishing counting-house, in the sylvan gaieties of a German bathing-place. Flirting with these, was an adventurous dancing-master from Paris, whose profession at present was kept in the background, and whose well-curled black hair, diamond pin, and frogged coat, hinted at the magnifico incog: and also enabled him, if he did not choose in time to follow his own profession, to pursue another one, which he had also studied, in the profitable mystery of the Redoute. There were many other individuals,

whose common-place appearance did not reveal a character which perhaps they did not possess. There were officers in all uniforms,—and there were some uniforms without officers. But all looked perfectly *comme il faut*, and on the whole very select; and if the great persons endeavoured for a moment to forget their dignity, still these slight improprieties were amply made up by the affected dignity of those little persons who had none to forget.

"And how like you the Baths of Ems?" asked the Baron of Vivian; "we shall get better seats to-morrow, and perhaps be among those whom you shall know. I see many friends and some agreeable ones. In the meantime, you must make to-day a good dinner, and I'll amuse you, and assist your digestion by putting you up to all the curious characters whom you are dining with." So saying, the Baron seized the soup-ladle.

At this moment a party entered the room, who were rather late in their appearance, but who attracted the attention of Vivian so keenly, that he almost forgot the gay crowd on whom

he was lately gazing with such amusement. The group consisted of three persons; a very handsome fashionable-looking young man, who supported on each arm a female. The lady on his right arm was apparently of about five-and-twenty years of age. She was of majestic stature; her complexion of untinged purity. Her features were like those conceptions of Grecian sculptors, which in moments of despondency, we sometimes believe to be ideal. Her full eyes were of the same deep blue as a mountain-lake, and gleamed from under their long lashes, as that purest of waters beneath its fringing sedge. Her light brown hair was braided from her high forehead, and hung in long full curls over her neck; the mass gathered up into a Grecian knot, and confined by a bandeau of cameos. She wore a superb dress of the richest black velvet, whose folding drapery was confined round a waist which was in exact symmetry with the proportions of her full bust, and the polished roundness of her bending neck. On the little finger of an ungloved hand, sparkled a diamond of unknown value, which was

linked by a small Venetian chain to a gorgeous bracelet of the most precious stones. The countenance of the lady was dignified, without any expression of pride; and reserved, without any of the harshness of austerity. In gazing on her, the enraptured spectator for a moment believed that Minerva had forgotten her severity, and had entered into a delightful rivalry with Venus.

Her companion was much younger, much shorter, and of slender form. The long tresses of her chesnut hair shaded her oval face. Her small aquiline nose, bright hazel eyes, delicate mouth, and the deep colour of her lips, were as remarkable as the transparency of her complexion. The flush of her cheek was singular —it was of a brilliant pink: you may find it in the lip of an Indian shell. The blue veins played beneath her arched forehead, like lightning beneath a rainbow. She was simply dressed in white, and a damask rose, half hid in her clustering hair, was her only ornament. This lovely creature glided by Vivian Grey almost unnoticed, so fixed was his gaze on her

companion. Yet, magnificent as was the style of Lady Madeleine Trevor, there were few who preferred even her commanding graces, to the softer beauties of Violet Fane.

This party having passed Vivian, proceeded to the top of the room, where places had been kept for them. Vivian's eye watched them till they were lost among surrounding visitors: their peculiar loveliness could not deceive him.

"English, no doubt," observed he to the Baron; "who can they be?"

"I haven't the least idea—that is, I don't exactly know—that is, I think they are English," answered the Baron, in such a confused manner that Vivian stared. Whether his Excellency observed his friend's astonishment or not, I cannot say; but, after musing a moment, he recovered himself.

"The unexpected sight of a face we feel that we know, and yet cannot immediately recognize, is extremely annoying—it is almost agitating. They are English; the lady in black is Lady Madeleine Trevor; I knew her in London."

"And the gentleman?" asked Vivian, rather anxiously: "is the gentleman a Mr. Trevor?"

"No, no, no; Trevor, poor Trevor is dead, I think—is, I'm sure, dead. That, I am confident, is not he. He was of the —— family, and was in office when I was in England. It was in my diplomatic capacity that I first became acquainted with him. Lady Madeleine was, and, as you see, is a charming woman,—a very charming woman is Lady Madeleine Trevor."

"And the young lady with her?"

"The young lady with her—I cannot exactly say—I do not exactly know. Her face is familiar to me, and yet I cannot remember her name. She must have been very young, as you may see, when I was in England; she cannot now be above eighteen. Miss Fane must therefore have been very young when I was in England. Miss Fane!—how singular I should have mentioned her name!—that is her name—Violet Fane—a cousin, or some relation of Lady Madeleine's;—good family, very good family.—Shall I help you to some soup?"

Whether it was from not being among his friends, or some other cause, I know not, but the Baron was certainly not in his usual spirits this day at dinner. Conversation, which with him was generally as easy as it was brilliant—like a fountain at the same time sparkling and fluent—was evidently constrained. For a few minutes he talked very fast, and was then uncommunicative, absent, and dull. He moreover drank a great deal of wine, which was not his custom; but the grape did not inspire him. Vivian found amusement in his next neighbour, a forward, bustling man, clever in his talk, very fine, but rather vulgar. He was the manager of a company of Austrian actors, and had come to Ems on the chance of forming an engagement for his troop, who generally performed at Vienna. He had been successful in his adventure, the Archduke having engaged the whole band at the New House, and in a few days the troop were to arrive; at which time, the manager was to drop the character of a travelling gentleman, and cease to dine at the Table d'Hôte of Ems. From this man Vivian

learnt that Lady Madeleine Trevor had been at the Baths for some time before the season commenced; that at present, her's was the party which, from its long stay, and eminent rank, gave the tone to the amusements of the place; the influential circle, which those who have frequented watering-places have often observed, and which may be seen at Ems, Spa, or Pyrmont, equally as at Harrowgate, Tunbridge Wells, or Cheltenham.

CHAPTER VI.

When dinner was finished, the party broke up, and most of them assembled in the gardens. The Baron, whose countenance had assumed its wonted cheerfulness, and who excused his previous dulness by the usual story of a sudden head-ache, proposed to Vivian to join the promenade. The gardens were very full, and the Baron recognized many of his acquaintance.

"My dear Colonel,—who possibly expected to meet you here? why! did you dine in the saloon? I only arrived this morning—this is my friend, Mr. Grey—Colonel von Trumpetson."

"An Englishman, I believe?" said the Colonel bowing. He was a starch *militaire*, with a blue

frock coat buttoned up to his chin, a bald head with a few grey hairs, and long thin mustachios like a mandarin's. "An Englishman, I believe; —pray, Sir, can you inform me whether the waistcoats of the household troops, in England, have the double braid?"

"Sir!" said Vivian.

"I esteem myself particularly fortunate in meeting with an English gentleman, your Excellency. It was only at dinner to-day that a controversy arose between Major von Musquetoon, and the Prince of Buttonstein, about the waistcoats of the English Household troops. As I said to the Prince, you may argue for ever, for at present we cannot decide the fact. How little did I think when I parted from the Major, that, in a few minutes, I should be able to settle this important question beyond a doubt;—I esteem myself particularly fortunate in meeting with an Englishman."

"I regret to say, Colonel, that far from being able to decide this important question, I hardly know what Household troops really are."

"Sir, I wish you good morning," said the

Colonel, very drily; and, staring very keenly at Vivian, he walked away.

"Well, that's beautiful, Grey, to get rid of that horrible old bore with such exquisite tact—Double braid! an old dunder-pate!—he should be drummed out of the regiment; but he's good enough to fight, I suppose," added the plenipotentiary, with a smile and shrug of the shoulders, which seemed to return thanks to Providence, for having been educated in the civil service.

At this moment Lady Madeleine Trevor, leaning on the arm of the same gentleman, passed, and the Baron bowed. The bow was stiffly returned.

"You know her ladyship, then!—well!"

"I did know her," said the Baron, "but I see from her bow, that I am at present in no very high favour. The truth is, she is a charming woman, but I never expected to see her in Germany, and there was some little commission of her's which I neglected—some little order for Eau de Cologne—or a message about a worked pocket handkerchief, or a fancy shawl, which I utterly forgot;—and then, I never

wrote!—and you know, Grey, that these little sins of omission are never forgiven by women."

"My dear friend, De Konigstein—one pinch! one pinch!" chirped out a little old, odd-looking man, with a very *poudré* head, and dressed in a costume in which the glories of the vieille cour seemed to retire with reluctance. A diamond ring twinkled on the snuffy hand, which was encircled by a rich ruffle of dirty lace. The brown coat was not modern, and yet not quite such an one as was worn by its master, when he went to see the King dine in public, at Versailles, before the Revolution:—large silver buckles still adorned the well-polished shoes; and silk stockings, whose hue was originally black, were picked out, with clock-work of gold.

"My dear Marquis—I'm most happy to see you; will you try the *boulangero*?"

"With pleasure!—with pleasure!—A–a–h! what a box! a *Louis-quatorze*, I think?"

"Oh, no! by no means so old."

"Pardon me, my dear fellow, my dear De Konigstein; I've studied the subject! I think a *Louis-quatorze*."

"I tell you I bought it in Sicily."

"A–a–h!" slowly exclaimed the little man: then shaking his head—"I think a *Louis-quatorze*?"

"Well, have it so, if you like, Marquis."

"A–a–h! I thought so—I thought a *Louis-quatorze*. Will you try mine?—will your friend try a pinch?—does he take snuff?—what box has he got?—is it an old one?—is it a *Louis-quatorze*?"

"He doesn't take snuff at all."

"A–a–h! if he did, perhaps he'd have a box—perhaps it would be an old one—most likely a *Louis-quatorze*."

"Very probably," said the Baron.

"A–a–h! I thought so," said the old man.

"Well, good afternoon," said the Baron passing on.

"My dear De Konigstein—one pinch, one pinch—you've often said you have a particular regard for me."

"My dear Marquis!"

"A–a–h! I thought so—you've often said you'd serve me, if possible."

"My dear Marquis, be brief."

"A–a–h! I will—there's a cursed crusty old Prussian officer here—one Colonel de Trumpetson."

"Well, my dear Marquis, what can I do? you're surely not going to fight him!"

"A–a–h! no, no, no—I wish you to speak to him."

"Well, well, what?"

"He takes snuff."

"What's that to me?"

"He's got a box."

"Well!"

"It's a *Louis-quatorze*—couldn't you get it for me?"

"Good morning to you," said the Baron, pulling on Vivian.

"You've had the pleasure, Grey, of meeting this afternoon two men, who have each only one idea. Colonel Von Trumpetson, and the Marquis de la Tabatière, are equally tiresome. But are they more tiresome than any other man who always speaks on the same subject? We are more irritable, but not more wearied, with a

man who is always thinking of the pattern of a button-hole, or the shape or a snuff-box, than with one who is always talking about pictures, or chemistry, or politics. The true bore is that man who thinks the world is only interested in one subject, because he, himself, can only comprehend one."

Here the Lady Madeleine passed again; and this time the Baron's eyes were fixed on the ground.

A buzz and bustle at the other end of the gardens, to which the Baron and Vivian were advancing, announced the entry of the Archduke. His Imperial Highness was a tall man, with a quick, piercing eye, which was prevented from giving to his countenance the expression of intellect which it otherwise would have done, by the dull and almost brutal effect of his flat, Calmuck nose. He was dressed in a plain, green uniform, adorned by a single star; but his tightened waist, his stiff stock, and the elaborate attention which had evidently been bestowed upon his mustachios, denoted the military fop. The Archduke was accompanied

by three or four stiff and stately-looking personages, in whom the severity of the martinet, seemed sunk in the servility of the aid-de-camp.

The Baron bowed very low to the Prince, as he drew near, and his Highness, taking off his cocked-hat with an appearance of cordial condescension, made a full stop. The silent gentlemen in the rear, who had not anticipated this suspense in their promenade, almost foundered on the heels of their royal master; and frightened at the imminency of the profanation, forgot their stiff pomp in a precipitate retreat of half a yard.

"Baron," said his Highness, "why have I not seen you at the New House?"

"I have but this moment arrived, may it please your Imperial Highness."

"Your companion," continued the Archduke, pointing very graciously to Vivian.

"My intimate friend, my fellow-traveller, and an Englishman. May I have the honour of presenting Mr. Grey to your Highness?"

"Any friends of the Baron von Konigstein

I shall always feel great pleasure in having presented to me. Sir, I feel great pleasure in having you presented to me. Sir, you ought to be proud of the name of Englishman—Sir, the English are a noble nation—Sir, I have the highest respect for the English nation!"

Vivian of course bowed very low, and of course made a very proper speech on the occasion, which, as all speeches of that kind should be, was very dutiful and quite inaudible.

"And what news from Berlin, Baron? let us move on," and the Baron, with Vivian on his arm, turned with the Archduke. The silent gentlemen, settling their mustachios, followed in the rear. For about half an hour, anecdote after anecdote, scene after scene, caricature after caricature, were poured out with prodigal expenditure for the amusement of his Highness; who did nothing during the exhibition but smile, stroke his whiskers, and at the end of the best stories fence with his forefinger at the Baron's side—with a gentle laugh, and a mock shake of the head—and a "Eh! Von Konigstein, you 're too bad!" Here Lady Madeleine Trevor passed again, and the Archduke's hat

nearly touched the ground. He received a most gracious bow.

"Finish the story about Salvinski, Baron, and then I 'll introduce you for a reward to the most lovely creature in existence — a country-woman of your's, Mr. Grey—Lady Madeleine Trevor."

"I have the honour of a slight acquaintance with her ladyship," said the Baron; "I had the pleasure of knowing her in England."

"Indeed! Oh! most fortunate mortal! I see she has stopped—talking to some stranger. Let us turn and join her."

The Archduke and the two friends accordingly turned, and of course the silent gentlemen in the rear followed with due precision.

"Lady Madeleine!" said his Highness, "I flattered myself for a moment that I might have had the honour of presenting to you a gentleman for whom I have a great esteem; but he has proved to me this moment that he is more fortunate than myself, since he had the honour before me of an acquaintance with Lady Madeleine Trevor."

"I have not forgotten Baron von Konigstein," said her ladyship, with a serious air; "may I ask your Highness how you prospered in your negociation with the Austrian troop?"

"Perfectly successful! — perfectly successful!—Inspired by your ladyship's approbation, my steward has really done wonders. He almost deserves a diplomatic appointment for the talent which he has shown; but what should I do without Cracowsky? Lady Madeleine, can you conceive what I should do without Cracowsky?"

"Not the least," said her ladyship, very good-naturedly.

"Cracowsky is every thing to me — every thing. It is impossible to say what Cracowsky is to me. I owe every thing to Cracowsky. To Cracowsky I owe being here." The Archduke bowed very low, for this eulogium on his steward also conveyed a compliment to her ladyship. The Archduke was certainly right in believing that he owed his summer excursion to Ems to his steward. That wily Pole, regularly every year put his Imperial master's

summer excursion up to auction, and according to the biddings of the proprietors of the chief baths, did he take care that his master regulated his visit. The *restaurateur* of Ems, in collusion with the official agent of the Duke of Nassau, were fortunate this season in having the Archduke knocked down to them.

"May I flatter myself that Miss Fane feels herself better?" asked the Archduke.

"She certainly does feel herself much better, but my anxiety about her does not decrease. In her illness apparent convalescence is sometimes more fearful than actual suffering."

The Archduke continued by the side of her ladyship for about twenty minutes, seizing every opportunity of uttering, in the most courtly tone, the most inane compliments; and then trusting that he might soon have her ladyship's opinion respecting the Austrian troop at the New House; and that von Konigstein and his English friend would not delay letting him see them there, his Imperial Highness, followed by his silent suite, left the gardens.

"I am afraid, your ladyship must have al-

most mistaken me for a taciturn lord chamberlain," said the Baron, occupying immediately the Archduke's vacated side.

"Baron von Konigstein must be very changed, if silence be imputed to him as a fault," said Lady Madeleine, with rather a severe smile.

"Baron von Konigstein *is* very much *changed* since last he had the pleasure of conversing with Lady Madeleine Trevor; more changed than her ladyship will perhaps believe; more changed than he can sometimes himself believe; I hope, I flatter myself, I feel sure, that he will not be less acceptable to Lady Madeleine Trevor, because he is no longer rash, passionate and unthinking; because he has learnt to live more for others and less for himself."

"Baron von Konigstein does indeed appear changed; since, by his own account, he has become in a very few years, a being, in whose existence philosophers scarcely believe—a perfect man."

"My self-conceit has been so often reproved by your ladyship, that I will not apologize for a

quality which I almost flattered myself I no longer possessed; but you will excuse, I am sure, one, who in zealous haste to prove himself amended, has, I fear, almost shown that he has deceived himself."

Some strange thoughts occurred to Vivian, whose eyes had never quitted her ladyship's face while this conversation was taking place. "Is this a woman to resent the neglect of an order for Eau de Cologne? my dear Von Konigstein, you're a very pleasant fellow, but this is not the way men apologize for the nonpurchase of a pocket-handkerchief!"

"Has your ladyship been long at Ems?"

"Nearly a month: we are travelling in consequence of the ill-health of a relation. It was our intention to have gone on to Pisa, but our physician, in consequence of the extreme heat of the summer, is afraid of the fatigue of travelling, and has recommended Ems. The air between these mountains is very soft and pure, and I have no reason to regret at present that we have not advanced farther on our journey."

"The lady who was with your party at din-

ner is, I fear, your invalid. She certainly does not look like one. I think," said the Baron, with an effort, "I think that her face is not unknown to me. It is difficult, even after so many years, to mistake Miss ———."

"Fane—" said Lady Madeleine, very firmly; for it seemed that the Baron required a little assistance at the end of his sentence.

"Ems," returned his Excellency, with great rapidity of utterance.—"Ems is, indeed, a charming place—at least to me. I have, within these few years, quite recurred to the feelings of my boyhood; nothing to me is more disgustingly wearisome than the gay bustle of a city. My present diplomatic appointment at Frankfort ensures a constant life among the most charming scenes of nature. Naples, which was offered to me, I refused. Eight years ago, I should have thought an appointment at Naples a Paradise on earth."

"Your Excellency must indeed be changed," remarked her ladyship.

"How beautiful is the vicinity of the Rhine! I have passed within these three days, for al-

most the twentieth time in my life, through the Rheingau; and yet how fresh, and lovely, and novel, seemed all its various beauties.—My young travelling companion is very enthusiastic about this gem of Germany.—He is one of your ladyship's countrymen. Might I take the liberty of introducing to you—Mr. Grey!"

Her ladyship, as if it could now no longer be postponed, introduced to the two gentlemen, her brother, Mr. St. George. This gentleman, who, during the whole previous conversation, had kept his head in a horizontal position, looking neither to the right, nor to the left, and apparently unconscious that any one was conversing with his sister, because, according to the English custom, he was not "*introduced*" —now suddenly turned round, and welcomed his acquaintance with great cordiality.

"Mr. Grey," asked her ladyship, "are you of Dorsetshire?"

"My mother is a Dorsetshire woman; her family name is Vivian, which name I also bear —Sir Hargrave Vivian, of Chester Grange."

"Have you a father living, may I ask?"

"At present in England."

"Then I think we are longer acquainted than we have been introduced. I met your father at Sir Hargrave Vivian's only last Christmas. Of such a father you must indeed be proud. He spoke of you in those terms that make me congratulate myself that I have met the son. You have been long from England, I think?"

"Nearly a year and a half; and I only regret my absence from it, because it deprives me of the presence of my parents."

The Baron had resigned his place by Lady Madeleine, and was already in close conversation with Mr. St. George, from whose arm Lady Madeleine's was disengaged. No one acted the part of Asmodeus with greater spirit than his Excellency; and the secret history of every person whose secret history could be amusing, delighted Mr. St. George.

"There," said the Baron, "goes the son of an unknown father; his mother followed the camp, and her offspring was early initiated in the mysteries of military petty larceny. As he grew up, he became the most skilful plunderer that

ever rifled the dying of both sides. Before he was twenty, he followed the army as a petty chapman, and amassed an excellent fortune by re-acquiring after a battle, the very goods and trinkets which he had sold at an immense price before it. Such a wretch could do nothing but prosper, and in due time, the sutler's brat became a Commissary general. He made millions in a period of general starvation, and cleared at least a hundred thousand dollars, by embezzling the shoe leather during a retreat. He is now a Baron, covered with orders, and his daughters are married to some of our first nobles. There goes a Polish Count, who is one of the greatest gamblers in Christendom. In the same season he lost to a Russian general, at one game of chess, his chief castle, and sixteen thousand acres of woodland; and recovered himself on another game, on which he won of a Turkish Pashaw one hundred and eighty thousand leopard skins. The Turk, who was a man of strict honour, paid the Count, by embezzling the tribute in kine of the province he governed; and, as on quarter-day he could not, of course,

make up his accounts with the Divan, he joined the Greeks."

While the Baron was entertaining Mr. St. George, the conversation between Lady Madeleine and Vivian proceeded.

"Your father expressed great disappointment to me, at the impossibility of his paying you a visit, in consequence of your mother's illness. Do you not long to see him?"

"More, much more, than I can express. Did your ladyship think my father in good spirits?"

"Generally so; as cheerful as all fathers can be without their only son," said her ladyship, smiling very kindly.

"Did he complain then of my absence?"

"He regretted it."

"I linger in Germany with the hope of seeing him; otherwise I should have now been much farther south. You will be glad to hear that my mother is quite recovered; at least, my last letters inform me so. Did you find Sir Hargrave as amusing as ever?"

"When is the old gentleman otherwise than the most delightful of old men? Sir Hargrave is

one of my greatest favourites. I should like to persuade you to return, and see them all. Can't you fancy Chester Grange very beautiful now, Albert?" said her ladyship, turning to her brother, "what is the number of our apartments? Mr. Grey, the sun has now disappeared, and I fear the night air among these mountains. We have hardly yet summer nights, though we certainly have summer days. We shall be happy to see you at our rooms." So saying, bowing very cordially to Vivian, and less stiffly to the Baron than she had done, Lady Madeleine left the gardens.

"There goes the most delightful woman in the world," said the Baron; "how fortunate that you know her! for really, as you might have observed, I have no great claims on her indulgent notice. I was certainly very wild in England; but then, young men, you know, Grey!—and I didn't leave a card, or call, before I went; and the English are very stiff, and precise about those things; and the Trevors had been very kind to me. I think we'd better take a little coffee now; and then, if you like, we'll just stroll into the REDOUTE."

In a brilliantly illuminated saloon, adorned with Corinthian columns, and casts from some of the most famous antique statues, assembled between nine and ten o'clock in the evening, many of the visitors at Ems. On each side of the room was placed a long narrow table, one of which was covered with green baize, and unattended; while the variously coloured leather surface of the other was very closely surrounded by an interested crowd. Behind this table stood two individuals of very different appearance. The first was a short, thick man, whose only business was dealing certain portions of playing cards with quick succession, one after the other; and as the fate of the table was decided by this process, did his companion, an extremely tall, thin man, throw various pieces of money upon certain stakes, which were deposited by the bystanders on different parts of the table; or, which was much oftener the case, with a silver rake with a long ebony handle, sweep into a large enclosure near him, the scattered sums. This enclosure was called the Bank, and the mysterious ceremony in which these persons

were assisting, was the celebrated game of Rouge-et-Noir. A deep silence was strictly preserved by those who immediately surrounded the table ; no voice was heard, save that of the little, short, stout dealer ; when, without an expression of the least interest, he seemed mechanically to announce the fate of the different colours. No other sound was heard, except the gingle of the dollars and Napoleons, and the ominous rake of the tall, thin banker. The countenances of those who were hazarding their money were grave and gloomy : their eyes were fixed, their brows contracted, and their lips projected ; and yet there was an evident effort visible, to show that they were both easy and unconcerned. Each player held in his hand a small piece of pasteboard, on which, with a steel pricker, he marked the run of the cards ; in order, from his observations, to regulate his own play :—the Rouge-et-Noir player imagines that Chance is not capricious. Those who were not interested in the game, promenaded in two lines within the tables ; or, seated in recesses between

the pillars, formed small parties for conversation.

As Vivian and the Baron entered, Lady Madeleine Trevor, leaning on the arm of an elderly man, left the room; but as she was in earnest conversation, she did not observe them.

"I suppose we must throw away a dollar or two, Grey?" said the Baron, as he walked up to the table.

"My dear De Konigstein—one pinch—one pinch!"

"Ah! Marquis, what fortune to-night?"

"Bad—bad! I have lost my Napoleon: I never risk farther. There's that cursed crusty old De Trumpetson, persisting, as usual, in his run of bad luck; because he never will give in. Trust me, my dear De Konigstein, it'll end in his ruin; and then, if there's a sale of his effects, I shall, perhaps, get his snuff-box—a-a-h!"

"Come, Grey; shall I throw down a couple of Napoleons on joint account. I don't care much for play myself; but I suppose, at Ems,

we must make up our minds to lose a few Louis. Here! now, for the red—joint account, mind!"

"Done."

"There's the Archduke! Let's go and make our bow; we needn't stick at the table as if our whole soul were staked with our crown-pieces:—we'll make our bow, and then return in time to know our fate." So saying, the gentlemen walked up to the top of the room.

"Why, Grey!—Surely no—it cannot be—and yet it is. De Bœffleurs, how d'ye do?" said the Baron, with a face beaming with joy, and a hearty shake of the hand. "My dear, dear fellow, how the devil did you manage to get off so soon? I thought you were not to be here for a fortnight: we only arrived ourselves to-day."

"Yes—but I've made an arrangement which I did not anticipate; and so I posted after you immediately. Whom do you think I have brought with me?"

"Who?"

"Salvinski."

"Ah! And the Count?"

" Follows immediately. I expect him to-morrow or next day. Salvinski is talking to the Archduke; and see, he beckons to me. I suppose I 'm going to be presented."

The Chevalier moved forward, followed by the Baron and Vivian.

" Any friend of Prince Salvinski I shall always have great pleasure in having presented to me. Chevalier, I feel great pleasure in having you presented to me. Chevalier, you ought to be proud of the name of Frenchman. Chevalier, the French are a grand nation. Chevalier, I have the highest respect for the French nation."

" The most subtile diplomatist," thought Vivian, as he recalled to mind his own introduction, " would be puzzled to decide to which interest his Imperial Highness leans."

The Archduke now entered into conversation with the Prince, and most of the circle who surrounded him. As his Highness was addressing Vivian, the Baron let slip our hero's arm, and seizing hold of the Chevalier de Bœffleurs, began walking up and down the

room with him, and was soon engaged in very animated conversation. In a few minutes, the Archduke, bowing to his circle, made a move, and regained the side of a Saxon lady, from whose interesting company he had been disturbed by the arrival of Prince Salvinski—an individual of whose long stories and dull romances the Archduke had, from experience, a particular dread: but his Highness was always very courteous to the Poles.

"Grey, I've dispatched De Bœffleurs to the house, to instruct his servant and Ernstorff to do the impossible, in order that our rooms may be altogether. You'll be delighted with De Bœffleurs when you know him, and I expect you to be great friends. Oh! by the bye, his unexpected arrival has quite made us forget our venture at Rouge-et-Noir. Of course we're too late now for any thing; even if we had been fortunate, our doubled stake, remaining on the table, is, of course, lost: we may as well, however, walk up." So saying, the Baron reached the table.

"That is your Excellency's stake!—that is

your Excellency's stake!" exclaimed many voices as he came up.

"What's the matter, my friends? what's the matter?" asked the Baron very calmly.

"There's been a run on the red! there's been a run on the red! and your Excellency's stake has doubled each time. It has been 4—8—16—32—64—128—256—and now it's 512!" quickly rattled a little thin man in spectacles, pointing at the same time to his unparalleled line of punctures. This was one of those officious, noisy little men, who are always ready to give you unasked information on every possible subject; and who are never so happy as when they are watching over the interest of some stranger, who never thanks them for their unnecessary solicitude.

Vivian, in spite of his philosophy, felt the excitement and wonder of the moment. He looked very earnestly at the Baron, whose countenance, however, was perfectly unmoved.

"Grey," said he, very coolly, "It seems we're in luck."

"The stake 's then not all your own?" very eagerly asked the little man in spectacles.

"No part of it is yours, Sir," answered the Baron very drily.

"I 'm going to deal," said the short, thick man behind, "Is the board cleared?"

"Your Excellency then allows the stake to remain?" inquired the tall thin banker, with affected *nonchalance.*

"Oh! certainly," said the Baron, with real *nonchalance.*

"Three — eight — fourteen — twenty-four — thirty-four. Rouge 34 —."

All crowded nearer; the table was surrounded five or six deep, for the wonderful run of luck had got wind, and nearly the whole room were round the table. Indeed, the Archduke and Saxon lady, and of course the silent suite, were left alone at the upper part of the room. The tall banker did not conceal his agitation. Even the short, stout dealer ceased to be a machine. All looked anxious except the Baron. Vivian looked at the table; his Excellency watched, with a keen eye, the little dealer. No one even

breathed as the cards descended — "Ten—twenty"—(Here the countenance of the banker brightened)—twenty-two—twenty-five—twenty-eight—thirty-one—Noir 31.—The bank's broke: no more play to night. The Roulette table opens immediately."

In spite of the great interest which had been excited, nearly the whole crowd, without waiting to congratulate the Baron, rushed to the opposite side of the room, in order to secure places at the Roulette table.

"Put these five hundred and twelve Napoleons into a bag," said the Baron; "Grey, this is your share, and I congratulate you. With regard to the other half, Mr. Hermann, what bills have you got?"

"Two on Gogel's house of Frankfort,—accepted of course,—for two hundred and fifty each, and these twelve Napoleons will make it right," said the tall banker, as he opened a large black pocket-book, from which he took out two small bits of paper. The Baron examined them, and after having seen them endorsed, put

them calmly into his pocket, not forgetting the twelve Napoleons; and then taking Vivian's arm, and regretting extremely that he should have the trouble of carrying such a weight, he wished Mr. Hermann a very good night and success at his Roulette, and walked with his companion quietly home. Thus passed a day at Ems!

CHAPTER VII.

On the following morning, Vivian met with his friend Essper George, behind a small stall in the Bazaar.

"Well, your Highness, what do you wish? Here are Eau de Cologne, violet soap, and watch-ribbons; a smelling bottle of Ems crystal; a snuff-box of fig-tree wood. Name your price, name your price: the least trifle that can be given by a man who breaks a bank, must be more than my whole stock in trade's worth."

"I have not paid you yet, Essper, for my glass chain. There is your share of my winnings: the fame of which, it seems, has reached even you!" added Vivian, with no pleased air.

"I thank your Highness for the Nap; but

I hope I have not offended by alluding to a certain event, which shall be past over in silence," continued Essper George, with a look of mock solemnity. " I really think your Highness has but a faint appetite for good fortune. They deserve her most who value her least."

" Have you any patrons at Ems, Essper, that have induced you to fix on this place in particular for your speculations. Here, I should think you have many active rivals," said Vivian, looking round the various stalls.

" I have a patron here, may it please your Highness, a patron who has never deceived, and who will never desert me,—I want no other ;— and that 's myself. Now here comes a party: could your Highness just tell me the name of that tall lady now ?"

" If I tell you it is Lady Madeleine Trevor, what will it profit you ?"

Before Vivian could well finish his sentence, Essper had drawn out a long horn from beneath his small counter, and sounded a blast which echoed through the arched passages. The at-

tention of every one was excited, and no part of the following speech was lost.

" The celebrated Essper George, fresh from Fairyland, dealer in pomatum and all sorts of perfumery, watches, crosses, Ems crystal, coloured prints, Dutch toys, Dresden china, Venetian chains, Neapolitan coral, French crackers, chamois bracelets, tame poodles, and Cherokee corkscrews, mender of mandolins, and all other musical instruments, &c. &c. &c. &c. to her Royal Highness, Lady Madeleine Trevor, and all her royal family, has just arrived at Ems, where he only intends to stay two or three days, and a few more weeks besides.—Now, your ladyship, what do you wish?"

" Mr. Grey," said her ladyship, smiling, " you can perhaps explains the reason of this odd greeting. Who is this singular being?"

" The celebrated Essper George, just"—— again commenced the conjuror; but Vivian prevented the repetition.

" He is an odd knave, Lady Madeleine, that I 've met with before, at other places. I believe

I may add, an honest one. What say you, Essper ?"

" More honest than moonlight, my lady, for that deceives every one; and less honest than self-praise, my lady, for that deceives no one."

" My friend, you have a ready wit."

" My wit is like a bustling servant, my lady; always ready when not wanted; and never present at a pinch."

" Come, I must have a pair of your chamois bracelets. How sell you them ?"

" I sell nothing, my lady; all here is gratis to beauty, virtue, and nobility: and these are my only customers."

" Thanks will not supply a stock-in-trade though, Essper," said Vivian.

" Very true! your Highness; but my customers are apt to leave some slight testimonies behind them of the obligations which they are under to me; and these, at the same time, are the prop of my estate and the proof of their discretion. But who comes here ?" said Essper, drawing out his horn. The sight of this terrible instrument, reminded Lady Madeleine how

greatly the effect of music is heightened by distance, and she made a speedy retreat. Her ladyship, with her companion, the elderly gentleman with whom she left the Redoute the preceding night, and Vivian, stopped one moment to watch the party to whom Essper George alluded. It was a family procession of a striking character.

Three daughters abreast, flanked by two elder sons, formed the first file. The father, a portly prosperous-looking man, followed, with his lady on his arm. Then came two nursery maids, with three children, between the tender ages of five and six. The second division of the grand army, consisting of three younger sons, immediately followed. This was commanded by a tutor. A governess and two young daughters then advanced; and then came the extreme rear—the suttlers of the camp—in the persons of two footmen in rich laced liveries, who each bore a basket on his arm, filled with various fancy articles, which had been all purchased during the promenade of this nation through only part of the bazaar.

"Who can they be?" said her ladyship.

"English," said the elderly gentleman; who had been already introduced by Lady Madeleine to Vivian as her uncle, Mr. Sherborne.

The trumpet of Essper George produced a due effect upon the great party. The commander-in-chief stopped at his little stall, and as if this were the signal for general attack and plunder, the files were all immediately broken up. Each individual dashed at his prey, and the only ones who struggled to maintain a semblance of discipline, were the nursery maids, the tutor, and the governess, who experienced the greatest difficulty in suppressing the early taste which the detachment of light infantry indicated for booty. But Essper George was in his element: he joked, he assisted, he exhibited, he explained; tapped the cheeks of the children, and complimented the elder ones; and finally, having parted at a prodigious profit with nearly his whole stock, paid himself out of a large and heavy purse, which the portly father, in his utter inability to comprehend the complicated accounts and the debased currency,

with great frankness deposited in the hands of the master of the stall, desiring him to settle his own claims.

"The tradesman is more singular even than his customers," said Mr. Sherborne; "I think you said you knew something of him, Mr. Grey?"

"I knew him, Sir, before, as a conjuror at Frankfort fair."

"By a conjuror, do you mean, Mr. Grey, one of those persons who profess an ability to summon, by the adjuration in a sacred name, a departed spirit; or merely one, who by his dexterity in the practice of sleight-of-hand, produces certain optical delusions on the sight and senses of his fellow men?"

"I met Essper George certainly only in your latter capacity, Mr. Sherborne."

"Then, Sir, I cannot agree with you in your definition of his character. I should rather style him a *juggler* than a *conjuror*. Would you call that man a *conjuror* who plays a trick with a cup and balls—a sprinkling of rice, or a bad shilling?"

"You are perhaps, Sir, critically speaking right; but the world in general are not such purists as Mr. Sherborne. I should not hesitate to describe Essper George as a *conjuror*. It is an use of the word which common parlance has sanctioned. We must always remember that custom is stronger than etymology."

"Sir, are you aware that you 're giving loose to very dangerous sentiments? I may be too precise, I may be too particular; but Sir, I read Addison—and Sir, I think Pope a poet."

"Then Sir, I am happy to say that our tastes agree," said Vivian, bowing.

"I 'm very happy to hear it—I 'm very glad of it—Sir, I congratulate you—give me your hand—you 're the first bearable young man that I 've met with for these last twenty years.—Sir, they sometimes talk of our laws and constitution being in danger, which is seldom true—how is it that no one calls out that our language is in danger? A noble poet, whom I honour for his defence of Pope, and who, in my opinion, has gained more glory by that letter of his,

than by all the rhapsodies of false brilliancy, bad taste, and exaggerated feeling, which ever claimed the attention of the world under the title of Eastern Tales, has called this the AGE OF BRONZE—why didn't he call it the AGE OF SLANG?"

"But, my dear uncle," said Lady Madeleine, "now that you and Mr. Grey understand each other, you surely will not maintain that his use of the word *conjuror* was erroneous. Custom surely has some influence upon language. You would think me very affected, I'm sure, if I were to talk of putting on a *neck-kerchief*."

"My dear, Mr. Grey *was* right, and I was wrong: I carried the point a little too far; but I feel it my duty to take every opportunity of informing the youth of the present day that I hold them in absolute contempt. Their affectation, their heartlessness, their artificial feelings, their want of all real, genuine, gentlemanly, English sentiments,—and, above all, their slang,—have disgusted me—I'm very glad to find that Mr. Grey is not guilty of these follies--I'm very glad to find that he believes that a man

older than himself is not quite a fool—I wish I could say as much for Albert. Mr. Grey was certainly right:—next to being correct, a man should study to be candid—I haven't met with a candid man these fifty years—no one now will own, by any chance, they're ever wrong. Now, for myself, it's very odd, I never form a hasty opinion, and yet I'm not always right: but I always own it—I make it the principle of my life to be candid."

"I hope I may be allowed to ask after Miss Fane, although I have not the honour of her acquaintance."

"She continues much better; my uncle and myself are now about to join her in the Lime-walk, where, by this time, she and Albert must have arrived; if you are not otherwise engaged, and will join our morning stroll, it will give us much pleasure."

Nothing in the world could give Vivian greater pleasure; he felt himself irresistibly impelled to the side of Lady Madeleine; and only regretted his acquaintance with the Baron, because he felt conscious that there was some

secret cause, which prevented that intimacy from existing between his Excellency and the Trevor party, which his amusing talents and his influential rank would otherwise have easily produced. When they reached the Lime-walk, Miss Fane and her cousin were not there, although the time of appointment was considerably past.

"I hope nothing has happened," said Lady Madeleine; "I trust she is not taken unwell."

"Quite improbable!" said Mr. Sherborne; "there must be some other reason: if she were unwell, the servant would have been here."

"Let us return," said Lady Madeleine.

"By no means, my dear," said Mr. Sherborne, who had the greatest affection for his nieces; "Mr. Grey will, I have no doubt, have the goodness to remain with your ladyship, and I will fetch Violet; you may depend upon it, *she* is ready to come;" so saying, Mr. Sherborne stalked off at a very quick pace.

"My dear uncle is rather a character, Mr. Grey; but he is as remarkable for his excellence of heart, as for any little peculiarities in

his habits. I am glad that you have made a favourable impression upon him; because, as I hope you will be much in his company, you stand now no chance of being included in the list of young men whom he delights to torment, at the head of which, I regret to say, is my brother. By-the-bye, I do not know whether I may be allowed to congratulate you upon your brilliant success at the Redoute last night. It is fortunate, that all have not to regret your arrival at Ems as much as poor Mr. Hermann."

"The run of fortune was certainly most extraordinary. I 'm only sorry that the Goddess should have showed her favours on one who neither deserves, nor desires them; for I've no wish to be rich; and as I never lost by her caprices, it is hardly fair that I should gain by them."

"You do not play then, much?"

"I never played in my life, till last night. Gambling has never been one of my follies: although my catalogue of errors is fuller, perhaps, than most men's."

"I think Baron von Konigstein was your partner in the exploit."

"He was; and apparently as little pleased at the issue, as myself."

"Indeed!—Have you known the Baron long?"

"You will be surprised to hear that we are only friends of a week. I have been living, ever since I was in Germany, a most retired life. A circumstance of a most painful nature drove me from England—a circumstance of which, I can hardly flatter myself, and can hardly wish, that your ladyship should be ignorant."

"I am not unacquainted, Mr. Grey," said Lady Madeleine, much moved, "with an unhappy event, which we need not again mention. Believe me, that I learnt the sad history from one, who, while he spoke the rigid truth, spoke of the living sufferer in terms of the fondest affection."

"A father!" said Vivian, with an agitation which he did not affect to suppress, "a father can hardly be expected to be impartial."

"Such a father as yours must always be so. He is one of those men who must be silent, or speak truth. I only wish that he was with us now, to assist me in bringing about what he must greatly desire—your return to England."

"It cannot be—it cannot be—I look back to the last year which I spent in that country with feelings of such disgust, I look forward to a return to that country with feelings of such repugnance—that—but I feel I'm trespassing beyond all bounds, in dwelling on these subjects to your ladyship. They are those on which I have never yet conversed with human being; but the unexpected meeting with a friend—with a friend of my father, I mean, has surprised me into a display of feelings which I thought were dead within me; and for which, I am sure, the custom of society requires an apology."

"Oh! do not say so, Mr. Grey—do not say so! When I promised your father, that in case we met, I should even seek your society, I entered into an engagement, which, though I am surprised I am now called upon to fulfil, I did not form in a careless spirit. Let us understand

each other: I am inclined to be your friend, if you will permit it; and the object which I wish to obtain by our friendship, I have not concealed: at least, I am frank. I have suffered too much myself, not to understand how dangerous, and how deceitful is the excess of grief. You have allowed yourself to be overcome by that which Providence intended as a lesson of instruction—not as a sentence of despair. In your solitude you have increased the shadow of those fantasies of a heated brain, which converse with the pure sunshine of the world, would have enabled you to dispel."

"The pure sunshine of the world, Lady Madeleine!—would that it had ever lighted me! My youth flourished in the unwholesome sultriness of a blighted atmosphere, which I mistook for the resplendent brilliancy of a summer-day. How deceived I was, you may judge, not certainly from finding me here; but I am *here*, because I have ceased to suffer, only in having ceased to hope."

"You have ceased to hope, Mr. Grey, because hope and consolation are not the visible

companions of solitude, which are of a darker nature. Hope and consolation spring from those social affections, which your father, among others, has taught me to believe imperishable. With such a parent, are you justified in acting the part of a misanthrope? Ought you not rather to hope, to believe that there are others, whose principle of being is as benevolent, if not as beneficial as his own?"

"Lady Madeleine, I do believe it; if I had doubted it, my doubts must end this day; but you mistake in believing that I am a misanthrope. It is not Sorrow now that makes me sad; but Thought that has made me grave. I have done with grief; but my release from suffering has been gained at a high price. The ransom which freed me from the slavery of sorrow was—HAPPINESS."

"I am no metaphysician, Mr. Grey, but I fear you have embraced a dark philosophy. Converse with the world, now that your passions are subdued, and your mind matured, will do more for you than all the arguments of philosophers. I hope yet to find you a believer in the

existence of that good which we all worship, and all pursue. Happiness comes when we least expect it, and to those who strive least to obtain it—as you were fortunate yesterday at the Redoute, when you played without an idea of winning. The truth seems, that after all, we are the authors of our own sorrow. In an eager pursuit to be happy, and to be rich, men do many unwise, and some unprincipled actions; it ends in their becoming miserable, and continuing poor. The common course of events will bring to each mortal his fair share of fortune. The whole secret of life seems to be to restrain our passions, and let the common course of events have its run. But I will not enter into an argument which I have not the vanity to suppose that I possess the ability to maintain; and yet which I feel that I ought not to have the weakness to lose. But here comes my uncle, and Violet too! Well, my dear Sir, you've brought the truant, I see!"

"Brought her, indeed, dear little thing! I knew it was not her fault; I said she was not unwell; I wonder what St. George will do

next! Mr. Grey, this is my niece Violet, Miss Fane: and Violet, my dear, this is Mr. Grey, and I wish all persons of his age were like him. As for the Honourable Mr. St. George, he gets more unbearable every day. I suppose soon he'll '*cut*' his own family."

"Well, I regret uncle, that I think in this business you are entirely wrong," said Miss Fane.

"Now, Violet! now, how can you be so wilful! to contradict me so, when you haven't a shadow of a defence for your cousin's unprincipled conduct!"

"My dear uncle, is it so unprincipled to break an appointment? I think it is one of the most agreeable and pleasant habits in the world. No young man is expected to keep an appointment."

"Now, Violet! how can you go on so? You know if there's one thing in the world that I detest more than another, it is breaking an appointment—a vice, which, as far as I can observe, has originated in your *young men* of the present day. And who the devil are these young men,

that the whole system of civilized society is to be disorganised for their convenience? *Young men*, indeed! I hate the phrase. I wish I could hear of more *young gentlemen*, and fewer *young men*. There isn't a young man in the world for whom I haven't the most sovereign contempt; I don't mean you, Mr. Grey. I 've the highest respect for you. I mean that mass of half-educated, inexperienced, insolent, conceited puppies, who think every man 's a fool who 's older than themselves; whose manners are a mixture of the vices of all nations, and whose talk is the language of none; at the head of whom is my nephew—your brother, Lady Madeleine Trevor—your cousin, Violet Fane—I mean Mr. Albert St. George."

Mr. Sherborne had now worked himself into a terrible passion; and the two ladies increased his irritability, by their incessant laughter.

"Well, I confess I do not see that Albert deserves this tirade," continued Miss Fane; "only think, my dear uncle, how many unexpected demands a man has upon his time. For all we know, unforeseen business may have pe-

remptorily required Albert's attention. How do you know that he hasn't been looking at a horse for a friend; or completing the purchase of a monkey; or making some discoveries in the highest branches of experimental philosophy? perhaps he *has* succeeded in lighting his cigar with a burning-glass."

"Miss Fane!"

"Mr. Sherborne!"

"If I were here alone, if Lady Madeleine were only here, I could excuse this; but how you are to answer to your conscience giving a stranger, Mr. Grey, a young gentleman for whom I have the highest respect, the impression that you, my niece, can tolerate for a moment, the existence of such monstrous absurdities is to me the most unaccountable thing that——"

"My dear uncle! how do you know that Mr. Grey has not got a monkey himself? You really should remember who is present, when you are delivering these philippics on the manners of the present century, and be cautious, lest, at the same time, you are not only violent, but personal."

"Now Violet, my dear!"

"My dear Sir!" said Lady Madeleine, "Violet is exerting herself too much; you know you are an enchanted lady at present, and may neither laugh, speak, nor sing."

"Well then, dear uncle, let us talk no more of poor Albert's want of memory. Had he come, I should very likely have been unwell, and then he would have stayed at home the whole morning for no earthly good. As it is, here I am; with the prospect of a very pleasant walk, not only feeling quite well, but decidedly better every day,—so now let us make an apology to Mr. Grey, for having kept him so long standing."

"Violet, you 're an angel! though I'm your uncle, who say so;—and perhaps, after all, as it wasn't a positive appointment, St. George is not so much to blame. And I will say this for him, that with all his faults, he is on the whole very respectful to me, and I sometimes try him hard. I 'm not in the habit of making hasty observations, but if ever I find myself doing so, I 'm always ready to own it. There 's

no excuse, however, for his not fetching you, my dear!—what business had he to be going about with that Baron von Konigstein—that foreign——"

"Friend of Mr. Grey's, my dear uncle," said Lady Madeleine.

"Humph!"

As Mr. Sherborne mentioned the Baron's name, the smiling face of Lady Madeleine Trevor became clouded, but the emotion was visible only for a moment, as the soft shadow steals over the sunny wood. Miss Fane led on her uncle, as if she were desirous to put an end to the conversation.

"You would scarcely imagine, Mr. Grey, from my cousin's appearance, and high spirits, that we are travelling for her health; nor do her physicians, indeed, give us any cause for serious uneasiness—yet I confess, that at times, I cannot help feeling very great anxiety. Her flushed cheek, and the alarming languor which constantly succeeds any exertion or excitement, make me fear that her complaint is more deeply seated than they are willing to acknowledge."

"Let us hope that the extraordinary heat of the weather may account, in a great degree, for this distressing languor."

"We are willing to adopt any reasoning that gives us hope, but I cannot help remembering that her mother died of consumption."

"Oh! Lady Madeleine," said Miss Fane, looking back, "do not you think I'm strong enough to walk as far as the New Spring? My uncle says, he is sure that I should be much better if I took more exercise, and I really want to see it. Can't we go to-morrow? I dare say, as Albert played truant to-day, he will condescend to escort us."

"Condescend, indeed! when I was a young man——"

"You a young man! I don't believe you ever were a young man," said Miss Fane, putting her small hand before a large open mouth, which was about to deliver the usual discourse on the degeneracy of the "present day."

The walk was most agreeable; and, with the exception of one argument upon the principles of the picturesque, which Mr. Sherborne insisted upon

Vivian's entering into, and in which, of course, that gentleman soon had the pleasure of proving himself candid by confessing himself confuted, it passed over without any disturbance from that most worthy and etymological individual. This was the first day, for nearly a year and a half, that Vivian Grey had joined with beings whose talents and virtues he respected, in calm and rational conversation; this was nearly the first day in his life that Vivian Grey had conversed with any individuals, with no sinister views of self-advancement, and self-interest. He found his conversation, like his character, changed;—treating of things, rather than men; of nature, rather than society. To-day there was no false brilliancy to entrap the unwary; no splendid paradoxes to astound the weak; no poignant scandal to amuse the vile. He conversed calmly, without eagerness, and without passion; and delivering with ability his conscientious opinion upon subjects which he had studied, and which he understood, he found that while he interested others, he had also been interested himself.

CHAPTER VIII.

When the walking party returned home, they found a crowd of idle domestics assembled opposite the house, round a group of equipages, consisting of two enormous crimson carriages, a britchka, and a large caravan, on all which vehicles the same coat of arms was most ostentatiously blazoned.

"Some great arrival!" said Miss Fane.

"It must be the singular party that we watched this morning in the bazaar," said Lady Madeleine. "Oh, Violet! I've such a curious character to introduce you to, a particular friend of Mr. Grey's, who wishes very much to have the honour of your acquaintance, Mr. Essper George.

"What an odd name! Is he an Englishman?"

"His appearance is still more singular than his title. You shall see him to-morrow."

"These carriages, then, belong to him?"

"Not exactly," said Vivian.

In an hour's time, the party again met at dinner in the saloon. By the joint exertions of Ernstorff, and Mr. St. George's servants, the Baron, Vivian, and the Chevalier de Bœffleurs, were now seated next to the party of Lady Madeleine Trevor.

"My horses fortunately arrived from Frankfort this morning," said the Baron. "Mr. St. George and myself have been taking a ride very far up the valley. Has your ladyship yet been to the Castle of Nassau?"

"I am ashamed to say we have not. The expedition has been one of those plans, often arranged, and never executed."

"Oh! you should go by all means; it was one of my favourite spots: I took Mr. St. George there this morning. The ruin is one of the finest in Germany, which, as your ladyship

is well aware, is the land of ruins. An expedition to Nassau Castle would be a capital foundation for a pic-nic. Conceive, Miss Fane, a beautiful valley which was discovered by a knight, in the middle ages, following the track of a stag—how exquisitely romantic! The very incident vouches for its sweet seclusion. Cannot you imagine the wooded mountains, the old grey ruin, the sound of the unseen river? What more should we want, except agreeable company, fine music, and the best provisions, to fancy ourselves in Paradise?"

"You certainly give a most glowing description," said Miss Fane. "Why, Mr. Grey, this lovely valley would be a model for the solitude we were planning this morning. I almost wish that your Excellency's plan were practicable."

"I take the whole arrangement upon myself; there is not a difficulty. The ladies shall go on donkeys, or we might make a water excursion of it part of the way, and the donkeys can meet us at the pass near Stein, and then the gentlemen may walk; and if you fear the water at night, which is, perhaps,

dangerous, why then the carriages may come round: and if your own be too heavy for mountain roads, my britchka is always at your command. You see there is not a difficulty."

"Not a difficulty," said Mr. St. George: "Madeleine, we only wait for your consent."

"Which will not be withheld a minute, Albert; but I think we had better put off the execution of our plan till June is a little more advanced. I must have a fine summer night for Violet."

"Well then, I hold the whole party present, engaged to follow my standard whenever I have permission from the high authority to unfold it," said the Baron, bowing to Lady Madeleine: "and lest, on cool reflection, I shall not possess influence enough to procure the appointment, I shall, like a skilful orator, take advantage of your feelings, which gratitude for this excellent plan must have already enlisted in my favour, and propose myself as Master of the Ceremonies." The Baron's eye caught Lady Madeleine's, as he uttered this, and some-

thing like a smile, rather of pity than derision, lighted up her face.

Here Vivian turned round to give some directions to an attendant, and to his horror, found Essper George standing behind his chair.

"Is there any thing your Highness wants?"

Essper was always particularly neat in his appearance, but to-day the display of clean linen was quite ostentatious; and to make the exposure still more terrific, he had, for the purpose of varying his costume, turned his Huzzar-jacket inside-out, and now appeared in a red coat, lined with green."

"Who ordered you here, Sir?"

"My duty."

"In what capacity do you attend?"

"As your Highness' servant."

"I insist upon your leaving the room directly."

Here Essper looked very suppliant, and began to pant like a hunted hare.

"Ah! my friend, Essper George," said Lady Madeleine, "are you there? What's the matter, is any one ill-treating you?"

"This then is Essper George!" said Violet Fane, "what kind of creature can he possibly be? Why, Mr. Grey, what's the matter?"

"I'm merely discharging a servant at a moment's warning, Miss Fane; and if you wish to engage his constant attendance upon yourself, I have no objection to give him a character for the occasion."

"What do you want, Essper?" said Miss Fane.

"I merely wanted to see whether your walk this morning had done your Highness' appetite any good," answered Essper, looking very disconsolate; "and so I thought I might make myself useful at the same time; and though I don't bring on the soup in a cocked hat, and carve the venison with a *couteau-de-chasse*," continued he, bowing very low to Ernstorff, who standing stiff behind his master's chair, seemed utterly unaware that any other person in the room could experience a necessity; "still I can change a plate, or hand the wine, without cracking the first, or drinking the second."

"And very good qualities too!" said Miss

Fane. "Come, Essper, you shall put your accomplishments into practice immediately, so change my plate."

This Essper did with the greatest dexterity and quiet, displaying at the same time a small white hand, on the back of which was marked a comet and three daggers. As he had the discretion not to open his mouth, and performed all his duties with great skill, his intrusion in a few minutes was not only pardoned but forgotten.

"There has been a great addition to the visitors to-day, I see," said Lady Madeleine: "pray who are the new-comers?"

"English," said the Chevalier, who, seated at a considerable distance from her ladyship, had not spoken a word during the whole dinner.

"I'll tell you all about them," said the Baron. "This family is one of those, whose existence astounds the Continent much more than any of your mighty dukes and earls, whose fortunes, though colossal, can be conceived; and whose rank is understood. Mr. Fitzloom

is a very different personage; for, thirty years ago he was a journeyman cotton-spinner: some miraculous invention in machinery entitled him to a patent, which has made him one of the most important landed-proprietors in Great Britain. He has lately been returned a member for a great manufacturing city; and he intends to get over the two first years of his parliamentary career, by successively monopolizing the accommodation of all the principal cities of France, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy; and by raising the price of provisions and post-horses through a track of five thousand miles. My information is authentic, for I had a casual acquaintance with him in England. There was some talk of a contract for supplying our army from England, and I saw Fitzloom often on the subject; I have spoken to him to-day. This is by no means the first of the species that we have had in Germany. I can assure you, that the plain traveller feels seriously the inconvenience of following such a caravan. Their money flows with such unwise prodigality, that real liberality ceases to be

valued; and many of your nobility have complained to me, that, in their travels, they are now often expostulated with, on account of their parsimony, and taunted with the mistaken extravagance of a stocking-maker, or a porter-brewer."

"What pleasure can such people find in travelling?" wondered the honourable and aristocratic Mr. St. George.

"As much pleasure, and more profit, than half the young men of the present day. In my time, travelling was undertaken on a very different system to what it is now. The English youth then travelled to frequent, what Lord Bacon says are 'especially to be seen and observed—the Courts of Princes.' You all travel now, it appears, to look at mountains, and catch cold in spouting trash on lakes by moonlight. You all think you know every thing, none of you know any thing."

"But my dear Sir!" said the Baron, "although I willingly grant you, that one of the great advantages of travel is the opportunity which it affords us of becoming acquainted with human nature in all its varieties, as de-

veloped by different climates, different customs, different governments, and consequently of becoming enabled to form an opinion as to the general capabilities of man; and which knowledge is, of course, chiefly gained where human beings most congregate—great cities, and as you say, the Courts of Princes: still, Sir, we must also not the less forget, that one of the great benefits of travel is, that it enlarges a man's experience, not only of his fellow-creatures in particular, but of Nature in general. And this not merely by enabling him to see a quantity and a variety of landscape, but by permitting him to watch Nature at various times and seasons. Many men pass through life without seeing a sunrise: a traveller cannot. If human experience be gained by seeing men in their undress, not only when they are conscious of the presence of others; natural experience is only to be acquired by studying Nature at all periods, not merely when man is busy, and the beasts asleep."

"But what 's the use of this deep experience of Nature? Men are born to converse with

men, not with stocks and stones. He who has studied Le Sage, will be more happy and more successful in this world, than the man who muses over Rousseau."

"There I agree with you, Mr. Sherborne, I have no wish to make man an anchorite. But as to the utility, the benefit of a thorough experience of Nature, it appears to me to be evident. It increases our stock of ideas—"

"So does every thing."

"But it does more than this, Sir. It calls into being new emotions, it gives rise to new and beautiful associations; it creates that salutary state of mental excitement which renders our ideas more lucid, our conceptions more vivid, and our conclusions more sound. Can we too much esteem a study which, at the same time, renders our imagination more active, and our judgment more correct?"

"Well, Sir, there may be something in what you say, but not much."

"But my dear Sir," said Lady Madeleine, "if his Excellency will allow me to support an argument, which in his hands can require no as-

sistance, do not you think that a full communion with Nature is calculated to elevate our souls, and purify our passions, to——"

"So is reading your bible, my dear. A man's soul should always be elevated; and his passions would then require little purification. If they are not, he might look at mountains for ever, but I should not trust him a jot more."

"But, Sir," continued the Baron, with unusual warmth; "I am clear that there are cases in which the influence of nature has worked what you profess to treat as an impossibility, or a miracle. I am myself acquainted with an instance of a very peculiar character. A few years ago, a gentleman of high rank found himself exposed to the unhappy suspicion of being connected with some disgraceful and dishonourable transactions, which took place in the highest circles of England. Unable to find any specific charge which he could meet, he added one to the numerous catalogue of those unfortunate beings who have sunk in society, the victims of a surmise. He quitted England; and disgusted with the world,

became the profligate which he had been falsely believed to be. At the house of Cardinal * * * * *, at Naples, celebrated even in that city for its midnight orgies, and not only for its bacchanal revels, this gentleman became a constant guest. He entered with a mad eagerness into every species of dissipation, although none gave him pleasure; and his fortune, his health, and the powers of his mind, were all fast vanishing. One night, one horrible night of frantic dissipation, a mock election of Master of the Sports was proposed, and the hero of my tale had the splendid gratification of being chosen by unanimous consent to this new office. About two o'clock of the same night, he left the palace of the Cardinal, with an intention of returning. His way on his return led by the Chiaja, which you, Mr. Sherborne, who have been in Naples, perhaps remember. It was one of those nights which we witness only in the South. The blue and brilliant sea was sleeping beneath a cloudless sky; and the moon not only shed her light over the orange and lemon treess, which, spring

ing from their green banks of myrtle, hung over the water, but added fresh lustre to the white domes, and glittering towers of the city; and flooded Vesuvius and the distant coast with light, as far even as Capua. The individual of whom I am speaking, had passed this spot on many nights when the moon was not less bright, the waves not less silent, and the orange trees not less sweet; but to-night—to-night something irresistible impelled him to stop. What a contrast to the artificial light, and heat, and splendour of the palace to which he was returning. He mused in silence. Would it not be wiser to forget the world's injustice, in gazing on a moonlit ocean, than in discovering in the illumined halls of Naples, the baseness of the crowd which forms the world's power? To enjoy the refreshing luxury of a fanning breeze which now arose, he turned and gazed on the other side of the bay. Upon his right stretched out the promontory of Pausilippo; there were the shores of Baiæ. But it was not only the loveliness of the land which now overcame his spirit; he thought of those whose fame

had made us forget even the beauty of these shores, in associations of a higher character, and a more exalted nature. He remembered the time when it was his only wish to be numbered among them. How had his early hopes been fulfilled! What just account had he rendered to himself and to his country—that country that had expected so much—that self that had aspired even to more!

"Day broke over the city, and found him still pacing down the Chiaja. He did not return to the Cardinal's Palace; and in two days he had left Naples. I can myself, from personal experience, aver that this individual is now an useful and honourable member of society. The world speaks of him in more flattering terms."

The Baron spoke with great energy and animation. Violet Fane, who had been very silent, and who certainly had not encouraged by any apparent interest the previous conversation of the Baron, listened to this anecdote with the most eager attention; but the effect it produced upon Lady Madeleine Trevor was

most remarkable. At one moment Vivian thought that her ladyship would have fainted.

"Well!" said Mr. Sherborne, who first broke silence, "I suppose you all think I 'm wrong: I should like to hear your opinion, Mr. Grey, of this business. What do you think of the question?"

"Yes, pray give us your opinion, Mr. Grey," said Lady Madeleine with eagerness; as if she thought that conversation would give her relief. The expression of her countenance did not escape Vivian.

"I must side against you, Mr. Sherborne," said he; "his Excellency has, I think, made out his point. It appears to me, however, that there is one great argument in favour of a study of Nature, and, indeed, of travelling, which I think I have never seen used. It matures a man's mind, because it teaches him to distrust his judgment. He who finds that his preconceptions of natural appearances are erroneous, will in time suspect that his opinions of human nature may be equally incorrect; in short, that

his moral conceptions may be as erroneous as his material ones."

"Well! I suppose I must give up. It 's very odd, I never form a hasty opinion, and yet I 'm sometimes wrong. Never above owning it though—never above owning it—not like the young men of the present day, who are so confoundedly addicted to every species of error, that, for my own part, whenever they seem to suspect that they're wrong, I 'm always sure that they're right."

Here the party broke up. The promenade followed—the Archduke — his compliments — and courtiers—then came the Redoute. Mr. Hermann bowed low as the gentlemen walked up to the table. The Baron whispered Vivian that it was "expected" that they should play, and give the tables a chance of winning back their money. Vivian staked with the carelessness of one who wishes to lose. As is generally the case under such circumstances, he again left the Redoute a most considerable winner. He parted with the Baron at his Excellency's door,

and proceeded to the next, which was his own. Here he stumbled over something at the doorway, which appeared like a large bundle. He bent down with his light to examine it, and found Essper George, lying on his back, with his eyes half-open. It was some moments before Vivian perceived he was asleep; stepping gently over him, he entered his apartment.

CHAPTER IX.

When Vivian rose in the morning, a gentle tap at his door announced the presence of an early visitor, who, being desired to enter, appeared in the person of Essper George.

"Does your Highness want any thing?" asked Essper, with a very submissive air.

Vivian stared at him for a moment, and then ordered him to come in.

"I had forgotten, Essper, until this moment, that on returning to my room last night, I found you sleeping at my door. This also reminds me of your conduct in the saloon yesterday; and as I wish to prevent the repetition of such improprieties, I shall take this opportunity of informing you once for all, that

if you do not in future conduct yourself with more discretion, I must apply to the Maître d'Hôtel. Now, Sir! what do you want?"

Essper was silent, and stood with his hands crossed on his breast, and his eyes fixed on the ground.

"If you do not want any thing, quit the room immediately."

Here the singular being began to weep and sob most bitterly.

"Poor fellow!" thought Vivian, "I fear with all thy wit, and pleasantry, and powers, thou art, after all, but one of those capriccios, which Nature sometimes indulges in; merely to show how superior is her accustomed order to eccentricities, even accompanied with the rarest and most extraordinary powers."

"What is your wish, Essper?" continued Vivian, in a kinder tone. "If there be any service, any real service, that I can do you, you will not find me backward. Are you in trouble? you surely are not in want?"

"No, no, no!" sobbed Essper; "I wish to

be—to be your Highness' servant," here he hid his face in his hands.

"My servant! why surely if, as I have reason to suppose, you can maintain yourself with ease by your own exertions, it is not very wise conduct, voluntarily, to seek out a dependance upon any man. I'm afraid that you've been keeping company too much with the set of lazy, indolent, and insolent lacqueys, that are always loitering about these bathing places. Ernstorff's green livery and sword, have they not turned your brain, Essper?—how is it? tell me."

"No, no, no! but I want to be your Highness' servant, only your Highness' servant, I'm tired of living alone."

"But, Essper, remember, that to gain a situation as a servant, you must be a person of regular habits and certain reputation. I have myself a very good opinion of you, but I have myself seen very little of you, though more than any one here; and I am a person of a peculiar turn of mind. Perhaps there is not

another individual in this house, who would even allude to the possibility of engaging a servant without a character."

"Does the ship ask the wind for a character, when he bears her over the sea without hire, and without reward? and shall your Highness require a character from me, when I request to serve you without wages, and without pay?"

"Such an engagement, Essper, it would be impossible for me to enter into, even if I had need of your services, which at present I have not. But I tell you, frankly, that I see no chance of your suiting me. I should require an attendant of steady habits and experience; not one whose very appearance would attract attention when I wished to be unobserved, and acquire a notoriety for the master which he detests. There is little likelihood of my requiring any one's services, and with every desire to assist you, I warmly advise you to give up all idea of entering into a state of life, for which you are not the least suited. If, on consideration, you still retain your wish of becoming a servant, and remain at the Baths with the ex-

pectation of finding a master, I recommend you to assume, at least for the moment, a semblance of regularity of habits. I have spoken to a great many ladies here, about your chamois bracelets, for which I think you will find a great demand. Believe me, your stall will be a better friend than your master. Now leave me."

Essper remained one moment with his eyes still fixed on the ground; then walking very rapidly up to Vivian, he dropped on his knee, kissed his hand, and disappeared.

Mr. St. George breakfasted with the Baron, and the gentlemen called on Lady Madeleine early in the morning to propose a drive to Stein Castle; but her ladyship excused herself, and Vivian following her example, the Baron and Mr. St. George "patronized" the Fitzlooms, because there was nothing else to do. Vivian again joined the ladies in their morning walk; but Violet Fane was not in her usual high spirits—she complained more than once of her cousin's absence; and this, connected with some other circumstances, gave Vivian the first

impression that her feelings towards Mr. St. George were not merely those of a relation. As to the Chevalier de Bœffleurs, Vivian soon found that it was utterly impossible to be on intimate terms with a being without an idea. The Chevalier was certainly not a very fit representative of the gay, gallant, mercurial Frenchman: he rose very late, and employed the whole of the morning in reading the French newspapers, and playing billiards alternately with Prince Salvinski, and Count von Altenburgh.

These gentlemen, as well as the Baron, Vivian, and Mr. St. George, were to dine this day at the New House.

They found assembled, at the appointed hour, a party of about thirty individuals. The dinner was sumptuous—the wines superb. At the end of the banquet, the company adjourned to another room, where play was proposed, and immediately commenced. His Imperial Highness did not join in the game; but, seated in a corner of the apartment, was surrounded by five or six aid-de-camps, whose only busi-

ness was to bring their master constant accounts of the fortunes of the table, and the fate of his bets. His Highness did not stake.

Vivian soon found that the game was played on a very different scale at the New House to what it was at the Redoute. He spoke most decidedly to the Baron of his detestation of gambling, and expressed his unwillingness to play; but his Excellency, although he agreed with him in his sentiments, advised him to conform for the evening to the universal custom. As he could afford to lose, he consented, and staked boldly. This night very considerable sums were lost and won; but none returned home greater winners than Mr. St. George and Vivian Grey.

CHAPTER X.

The first few days of an acquaintance with a new scene of life, and with new characters, generally appear to pass very slowly; not certainly from the weariness which they induce, but rather from the keen attention which every little circumstance commands. When the novelty has worn off, when we have discovered that the new characters differ little from all others we have met before, and that the scene they inhabit is only another variety of the great order we have so often observed, we relapse into our ancient habits of inattention; we think more of ourselves, and less of those we meet; and musing our moments away in reverie, or in a vain attempt to cheat the coming day of

the monotony of the present one, we begin to find that the various-vested Hours have bounded, and are bounding away in a course at once imperceptible, uninteresting, and unprofitable. Then it is, that terrified at our nearer approach to the great river, whose dark windings it seems the business of all to forget, we start from our stupor to mourn over the rapidity of that collective sum of past-time, every individual hour of which we have in turn execrated for its sluggishness.

Vivian had now been three weeks at Ems, and the presence of Lady Madeleine Trevor and her cousin alone induced him to remain. Whatever was the mystery existing between her Ladyship and the Baron, and that there was some mystery Vivian could not for a moment doubt, his Excellency's efforts to attach himself to her party had been successful. The great intimacy subsisting between the Baron and her Ladyship's brother materially assisted in bringing about this result. For the first fortnight, the Baron was Lady Madeleine's constant attendant in the evening promenade, and often

in the morning walk; and though there were few persons whose companionship could be preferred to that of Baron von Konigstein, still Vivian sometimes regretted that his friend and Mr. St. George had not continued their morning rides. The presence of his Excellency seemed always to have an unfavourable influence upon the spirits of Violet Fane, and the absurd and evident jealousy of Mr. St. George, prevented Vivian from finding, in her agreeable conversation, some consolation for the loss of the sole enjoyment of Lady Madeleine's exhilarating presence. Mr. St. George had never met Vivian's advances with cordiality, and he now treated him with studied coldness.

The visits of the gentlemen to the New House, had been frequent. The saloon of the Archduke was open every evening, and in spite of his great distaste for the fatal amusement which was there invariably pursued, Vivian found it utterly impossible to decline frequently attending, without subjecting his motives to painful misconception. His fortune, his extraordinary fortune did not desert him, and ren-

dered his attendance still more a duty. The Baron was not so successful as on his first evening's venture at the Redoute; but Mr. St. George's star remained favourable. Of Essper George, Vivian had seen little. In passing through the Bazaar one morning, which he seldom did, he found to his surprise that the former conjuror had doffed his quaint costume, and was now attired in the usual garb of men of his condition of life. As Essper was busily employed at the moment, Vivian did not stop to speak to him; but he received a most respectful bow. Once or twice also, he had met Essper in the Baron's apartments; and he seemed to have become a very great favourite with the servants of his Excellency, and the Chevalier de Bœffleurs, particularly with his former butt, Ernstorff, to whom he now behaved with the greatest deference.

I said, that for the first fortnight, the Baron's attendance on Lady Madeleine was constant. It was after this time that his Excellency began to slacken in his attentions. He first disappeared from the morning walks, and yet he did

not ride; he then ceased from joining the party at Lady Madeleine's apartments in the evening, and never omitted increasing the circle at the New House for a single night. The whole of the fourth week the Baron dined with his Imperial Highness. Although the invitation had been extended to all the gentlemen from the first, it had been agreed that it was not to be accepted, in order that the ladies should not find their party in the *Salon* less numerous or less agreeable. The Baron was the first to break through a rule which he had himself proposed; and Mr. St George and the Chevalier de Bœffleurs soon followed his example.

"Mr. Grey," said Lady Madeleine one evening, as she was about to leave the gardens, "we shall be happy to see you to-night if you are not engaged—Mr. Sherborne only will be with us."

"I thank your Ladyship, but I fear that I am engaged," said Vivian; for the receipt of some letters from England made him little inclined to enter into society.

"Oh, no! you can't be engaged," said Violet

Fane; "pray come! pray come! I know you only want to go to that terrible New House; I wonder what St. George can find to amuse him there so keenly; I fear no good: men never congregate together for any beneficial purpose. I am sure, with all his gastronomical affectations, he would not, if all were right, prefer the most *exquis* dinner in the world to our society. As it is, we scarcely see him a moment. I think, Mr. Grey, that you are the only one who has not deserted the *Salon*. For once, give up the New House—I'm sure you are not in your usual spirits; you will be more amused, more innocently amused at least, even if you go to sleep like Mr. Sherborne, than you will with playing at that disgusting Rouge-et-noir, with a crowd of suspicious-looking men in mustachios."

Vivian smiled at Miss Fane's warmth, and was too flattered by the interest which she seemed to take in his welfare, to persist in his refusal, although she did dilate most provokingly on the absence of her cousin. Vivian soon joined them.

"Lady Madeleine is assisting me in a most

important work, Mr. Grey. I am making drawings of the whole Valley of the Rhine; I know that you are very accurately acquainted with the scenery; you can, perhaps, assist me with your advice about this view of Old Hatto's Castle; I am sure I 'm not quite right."

Vivian was so completely master of every spot in the Rhine-land, that he had no difficulty in suggesting the necessary alterations. The drawings, unlike most young ladies' sketches, were vivid representations of the scenery which they professed to depict; and Vivian forgot his melancholy as he attracted the attention of the fair artist to points of interest, unknown or unnoticed by the Guide-books, and the Diaries.

"You must look forward to Italy with great interest, Miss Fane?"

"The greatest! I shall not, however, forget the Rhine, even among the Apennines."

"Our intended fellow-travellers, Lord Mounteney and his family, are already at Milan," said Lady Madeleine to Vivian; "we were to have joined their party — Lady Mounteney is a Trevor."

"I have had the pleasure of meeting Lord Mounteney in England, at Sir Berdmore Scrope's: do you know him?"

"Very slightly. The Mounteneys pass the winter at Rome, where I hope we shall join them. Do you know the family intimately?"

"Mr. Ernest Clay, a nephew of his lordship's, I have seen a great deal of; I suppose, according to the adopted phraseology, I ought to describe him as my friend, although I am utterly ignorant where he is at present; and, although, unless he is himself extremely altered, there scarcely can be two persons who now more differ in their pursuits and tempers than ourselves."

"Ernest Clay! is he a friend of yours?—He 's somewhere on the continent now; I forget where; with some diplomatic appointment I think. Indeed, I 'm sure of the fact, though I 'm perfectly ignorant of the place, for it was through Mr. Trevor's interest that he obtained it. I see you smile at the idea of Ernest Clay drawing up a protocol!"

"Lady Madeleine, you have never read me

Caroline Mounteney's letter, as you promised," said Miss Fane; "I suppose full of raptures —'the Alps, and Apennines, the Pyrenæan, and the River Po.'"

"By no means: the whole letter of four sides, double crossed, is filled with an account of the Ballet at La Scala; which, according to Caroline, is a thousand times more interesting than Mont-Blanc, or the Simplon."

"One of the immortal works of Vigano, I suppose," said Vivian; "he has raised the ballet of action to an equality with tragedy. I have heard my father mention the splendid effect of his Vestale and his Otello."

"And yet," said Violet Fane, "I do not like Othello to be profaned. It is not for operas and ballets. We require the thrilling words."

"It is very true; yet Pasta's acting in the opera, and in an opera acting is only a secondary point, was a grand performance; and I have myself seldom witnessed a more masterly effect produced by any actor in the world, than I did a fortnight ago, at the Opera at Darmstadt, by Wild in Othello.

"I think the history of Desdemona is the most affecting of all tales," said Miss Fane.

"The violent death of a woman, young, lovely, and innocent, is assuredly the most terrible of tragedies," observed Vivian; "and yet, I know not why, I agree with you that Desdemona's is the *most* affecting of fates—more affecting than those of Cordelia, or Juliet, or Ophelia."

"It is," said Lady Madeleine, "because we always contrast her misery with her previous happiness. The young daughter of Lear is the child of misfortune: Juliet has the anticipation, not the possession of happiness; and the characters in Hamlet, seem so completely the sport of a mysterious, but inexorable destiny, that human interest ceases for those whose conduct does not appear to be influenced by human passions. The exquisite poetry—the miraculous philosophy of Hamlet, will always make us read it with delight, and study it with advantage; but, for Ophelia we do not mourn. We are interested in the fortunes of a fictitious character, because in witnessing a representation of a

scene of human life, we form our opinion of the proper course to be pursued by the imaginary agents; and our attention is excited, in order to ascertain whether their conduct and our opinions agree. But where the decree of fate is visibly being fulfilled, or the interference of a supernatural power is revealed, we know that human faculties can no longer be of avail; that prudence can no longer protect—courage no longer defend. We witness the tragedy with fear, but not with sympathy."

"I have often asked myself," said Miss Fane, "which is the most terrible destiny for a young woman to endure:—to meet death after a life of trouble, anxiety, and suffering; or suddenly to be cut off in the enjoyment of all things that make life delightful; with a heart too pure to be tainted by their possession, and a mind too much cultivated to over appreciate their value?"

"For my part," said Vivian, "in the last instance, I think that death can scarcely be considered an evil. The pure spirit would have only to sleep until the Great Day; and then—as Dryden has magnificently said 'wake an

angel still.' How infinitely is such a destiny to be preferred to that long apprenticeship of sorrow and suffering, at the end of which men are generally as unwilling to die as at the commencement !"

" And yet," said Miss Fane, " there is something fearful in the idea of sudden death."

" Very fearful !" muttered Vivian ; " very fearful in some cases ;" for he thought of one whom he had sent to his great account before his time.

" Violet, my dear !" said Lady Madeleine, in a very agitated voice ; " have you finished your drawing of the Bingenloch ?" But Miss Fane would not leave the subject.

" Very fearful in *all* cases, Mr. Grey. How few of us are prepared to leave this world without warning ! And if from youth, or sex, or natural disposition, or from the fortunate union of the influence of all these three, a few may chance to be better fitted for the great change than their companions, still, I always think that in those cases in which we view our fellow-creatures suddenly departing from this world,

apparently without a bodily or mental pang, there must be a moment of suffering, which none of us can understand; suffering, occasioned by a consciousness of immediately meeting death in the very flush of life, and earthly thoughts—a moment of suffering, which, from its intense and novel character, may appear an eternity of anguish. I shall, perhaps, not succeed in conveying my peculiar feeling on this subject to you. I have always looked upon such an end as the most terrible of dispensations."

"I enter into your feelings," answered Vivian; "although the light in which you view this subject is new to me. Terrible, however, as we may universally consider the event of a sudden death, I still do not believe that a long and painful illness ever exempts man from the suffering which you mention; but that he always quits life with the same unwillingness to die."

"I cannot agree with you, Mr. Grey, in this opinion, which you seem to entertain of the inefficacy of 'a long apprenticeship of sorrow and suffering.' From my own experience,

I should say that it robbed death of all its terrors. Death is most dreadful at a distance—illness weakens the mind in a wise proportion with the body; and therefore, at a certain period, the feelings are too enervated by debility, or too blunted by personal suffering, to experience *that* which in health appears the greatest trial in our dissolution—the parting with our friends. In the enjoyment of every pleasure which health and affluence can afford, I confess that it appears most dreadful to encounter the agonies of disease; and parting with all we love here, to sink into the grave, and be forgotten by those of whose every thought, when living, we seemed to be the centre. But when we are worn out with pain, the selfishness of our nature makes us look upon those around us, with little more interest than as the ministers of our wants. We forget all but the present suffering, and only look forward to the future as a release from it. If ever you have experienced a long and dangerous illness, Mr. Grey, I am confident that, on reflection, you will agree with me."

"My dear Violet," said Lady Madeleine; "I thought that Mr. Grey came here to-night to forget his melancholy. These surely are subjects which do not make men gay."

"I assure you, Lady Madeleine," said Vivian, "that I take great—the greatest interest in this subject. I have endured a most dangerous illness, Miss Fane, but it was not one of the kind you allude to. It was a violent fever, and I was not sensible of my disease till its danger was past. I have no very clear conception of my state of mind when I recovered; but I think, if I remember right, that I dreaded life as much as I feared death."

"That was a peculiar case," said Miss Fane; "a case in which death, from the state of mind, could have had no terrors. Of course my argument refers to the generality of long and dangerous illnesses, when the patient is only too sensible of the daily increasing debility. For myself, I distinctly remember being reduced to such fearful weakness, that the physicians and nurses round my bed believed me dying, if not dead; and from my complete

inanition, entirely past a knowledge of what was going on around me. They were deceived, however, in this. I heard them say that I was dying; more than once they thought that all was over; but it produced no emotion in my mind,—neither fear, nor sorrow, nor hope. I felt my breath fluttering fainter, and fainter. I could not move even my finger; and I thought indeed that all would soon be over; but it brought no pang for the sufferers who surrounded my bed, no anxiety, or desire for myself. At last I sunk into a deep sleep; and after a length of time I awoke with quickened feelings. My natural affections returned, and then I had a strong longing for life. Here I am now, enjoying excellent health, in spite of my dear physician's grave looks," said Miss Fane, putting her arm round Lady Madeleine's neck; "and not only health, but every blessing which youth can bring me. Nevertheless, dreading death as I do now, with the feelings of health and a happy life, I sometimes almost regret that I ever awoke from that perfect calm of every earthly passion."

As Vivian was thinking that Violet Fane was the most beautiful creature he had ever beheld, Lady Madeleine Trevor bent down, and kissed her forehead. Her ladyship's large blue eyes were full of tears. A woman's eye never seems more bright than when it glances through a tear—as the light of a star seems more brilliant when sparkling on a wave.

"Violet, my dear," said her ladyship, "let us talk no more of death."

"Who *was* talking of death?" said Mr. Sherborne, waking from a refreshing nap; "I'm sure I wasn't. Let me see—I forget what my last observation was; I think I was saying, Lady Madeleine, that a little music would refresh us all. Violet, my dear, will you play me one of my favourites?"

"What shall it be, dear Sir? I really think I may sing to-night. What think you, Lady Madeleine? I have been silent a fortnight." So saying, Miss Fane sat down to the piano.

Mr. Sherborne's favourite ensued. It was a lively air, calculated to drive away all melancholy feelings, and cherishing those bright

sunny views of human life which the excellent old man had invariably professed. But Rossini's Muse did not smile to-night upon her who invoked its gay spirit; and ere Lady Madeleine could interfere, Violet Fane had found more congenial emotions in one of Weber's prophetic symphonies.

Oh! Music! miraculous art, that makes the poet's skill a jest; revealing to the soul inexpressible feelings, by the aid of inexplicable sounds! A blast of thy trumpet, and millions rush forward to die: a peal of thy organ, and uncounted nations sink down to pray. Mighty is thy three-fold power!

First, thou canst call up all elemental sounds, and scenes, and subjects, with the definiteness of reality. Strike the lyre! Lo! the voice of the winds—the flash of the lightning—the swell of the wave—the solitude of the valley!

Then thou canst speak to the secrets of a man's heart as if by inspiration. Strike the lyre! Lo!—our early love—our treasured hate—our withered joy—our flattering hope!

And, lastly, by thy mysterious melodies, thou

canst recall man from all thought of this world and of himself—bringing back to his soul's memory, dark but delightful recollections of the glorious heritage which he has lost, but which he may win again. Strike the lyre! Lo! Paradise, with its palaces of inconceivable splendor, and its gates of unimaginable glory!

When Vivian left the apartment of Lady Madeleine, he felt no inclination to sleep; and instead of retiring to rest, he bent his steps towards the gardens. It was a rich summer night; the air, recovered from the sun's scorching rays, was cool—not chilling. The moon was still behind the mountains; but the dark blue heavens were studded with innumerable stars, whose tremulous light quivered on the face of the river. All human sounds had ceased to agitate; and the note of the nightingale, and the rush of the waters, banished monotony without disturbing reflection. But not for reflection had Vivian Grey deserted his chamber: his heart was full—but of indefinable sensations; and forgetting the world in the

intenseness of his emotions, he felt too much to think.

How long he had been pacing by the side of the river he knew not, when he was awakened from his reverie by the sound of voices. He looked up, and saw lights moving at a distance. The party at the New House had just broke up. He stopped beneath a branching elm-tree for a moment, that the sound of his steps might not attract their attention; and at this very instant the garden gate opened, and closed with great violence. The figure of a man approached. As he passed Vivian, the moon rose up from above the brow of the mountain, and lit up the countenance of the Baron. Despair was stamped on his distracted features.

CHAPTER XI.

When Vivian awoke in the morning, he found that the intenseness of his emotions had subsided; and that his sensations were not quite so indefinite as on the preceding night:—he found himself in love—with whom, however, was perhaps still doubtful. The image of Violet Fane had made his dreams delicious; but it must be confessed, that the eidolon sometimes smiled with the features of Lady Madeleine Trevor:—but that he looked on the world with new feelings, and a changed spirit,—with hope, and almost with joy,—was certain. The sweet summer morning had succeeded to the soft summer night. The sun illumined as yet only the tops of the western mountains; and the morning

breeze, unheated by his beams, told that it was June by the odours which it wafted around. At such a moment the sense of existence alone is happiness; but to Vivian it seemed that the sun was about to light up a happier world, and that the sweet wind blew from Paradise.

Young Love! young Love, 'thy birth was of the womb of morning dew, and thy conception of the joyous prime!'—so Spenser sings; and there are few, perhaps, who, on this subject, have not scribbled some stray stanzas in their time, if not as sweet, it may be more sincere. They will understand feelings which none can describe. How miraculous is that power, which, in an instant, can give hope to the desperate, and joy to the forlorn; which, without an argument, can vanquish all philosophy; and without a gibe silence all wit; which turns the light-hearted serious, while it makes the sorrowful smile; which is braver than courage, and yet more cautious than fear; which can make the fool outwit wisdom, and wisdom envy the fool!

It was in one of those sweet bowers, with which, as we have before mentioned, the gardens

of Ems wisely abound, that Vivian Grey had spent more than three hours, unconscious of the passing of a moment. A rustling among the trees first attracted his attention; and on looking quickly up the winding walk, he thought he saw Essper George vanish in the shrubbery. Was he watched?—But he soon forgot his slight anger in another fit of abstraction, from which he was wakened, as he imagined by the same sound. "This time, I'll catch you," thought Vivian. He jumped suddenly up, and nearly knocked down Lady Madeleine Trevor, who had entered the arbour.

"I hope I've not disturbed you, Mr. Grey," said her Ladyship, who saw that he was confused; "I am in want of an escort, and I have come to reclaim a truant knight. You forget that I had your pledge yesterday, to accompany me to the New Spring."

Vivian made a violent struggle to recover himself, and began to talk a quantity of nonsense to her ladyship, by way of apology for his negligence, and thanks for her kindness; Lady Madeleine listened, with her usual gentle

smile, to a long and muttered discourse, in which the words "Essper George, Miss Fane, and fine morning," were alone intelligible.

"Shall we have the pleasure of Miss Fane and Mr. Sherborne's company in our walk to-day?" asked Vivian.

"No! they are not going with us," said Lady Madeleine. "You will join our party at the Archduke's to-night, I hope, Mr. Grey," continued her Ladyship.

"Yes—I don't know:—that is, are you going, Lady Madeleine?"

"Why, my dear Sir, isn't this the fête night?"

"Ah! ah! I understand—I remember—it will give me the greatest pleasure to join the party at your Ladyship's rooms."

Lady Madeleine looked very earnestly at her companion, and then talked about the weather, and the beauty of summer, and the singing of birds, and a thousand other little topics, by which she soon restored him to his usual state of mind. In a quarter of an hour Vivian had quite recovered his senses; and only regretted

the part which he necessarily took in the conversation, because it prevented him from listening to the soft tones of her ladyship's voice, who he thought to-day looked a thousand times more beautiful than ever. He began also to think, that he should like to walk to the New Spring alone with her every morning of his life.

Vivian had been so occupied by his own feelings, that he and his companion had completed nearly half their walk, before it struck him that something was dwelling on the mind of Lady Madeleine. In the midst of the gayest conversation, her features more than once appeared to be in little accordance with the subject of discussion; and her voice often broke off abruptly at the commencement of a sentence—some sentence which it seemed she had not courage to finish.

"Mr. Grey," said her ladyship, suddenly; "I cannot conceal any longer, that I am thinking of a very different subject to the Archduke's ball. As you form part of my thoughts at this moment, I shall not hesitate to disbur-

then my mind to you; although, perhaps, I run the risk of being considered at the same time both impertinent and officious. Understand me, however, distinctly, that whatever I may say, you are not, for a moment, to believe that I am ostentatiously presuming to give you advice. There are many points, however, to which the hint or intimation of a friend may attract our attention with advantage; and although our conversation to-day may not be productive of any to you, believe me that I should very much grieve, if my gentle suggestion were construed into an unwarrantable interference."

"Any thing that Lady Madeleine Trevor can do, surely cannot be construed by any one as unwarrantable—any thing that Lady Madeleine Trevor can be kind enough to address to me, must always be received with the most respectful, the most grateful attention."

"I wish not to keep you in suspense, Mr. Grey. It is of the mode of life which I see my brother, which I see you pursuing here, that I wish to speak," said her ladyship, with

an agitated voice. "May I—may I *really* speak with freedom?"

"Any thing—every thing, with the most perfect unreserve and confidence," answered Vivian.

"You are aware, Mr. Grey, that Ems is not the first place at which I have met Baron von Konigstein."

"I am not ignorant that his Excellency has been in England."

"It cannot have escaped you, Mr. Grey, that I acknowledged his acquaintance with reluctance."

"I should judge, with the *greatest* reluctance, Lady Madeleine."

"And yet it was with still more reluctance, Mr. Grey, that I prevailed upon myself to believe you were his friend. I experienced the greatest delight, when you told me how short and accidental had been your acquaintance. I have experienced the greatest pain in witnessing to what that acquaintance has led; and it is with extreme sorrow, for my own weakness, in not having had courage to speak to you be-

fore, and with a hope of yet benefiting you, that I have been induced to speak to you now."

"Lady Madeleine, I trust there is no cause either for your sorrow or your fear; but much, much cause for my gratitude. Do not fear to be explicit."

"Now that I have prevailed upon myself to speak, Mr. Grey, and have experienced from you the reception that I gave you credit for; do not fear that there will be any want of openness on my part. I have observed the constant attendance of yourself, and my brother, at the New House with the greatest anxiety. I have seen too much of the world, not to be perfectly aware of the danger—the terrific danger, which young men, and young men of honour, must always experience at such places. Alas! I have seen too much of Baron von Konigstein, not to know that at such places especially, his acquaintance is fatal. The evident depression of your spirits yesterday, determined me on a step which I have for the last few days been considering. Your abstrac-

tion this morning frightened me. I can learn nothing from my brother. I fear that I am even now too late; but I trust, that whatever may be your situation, you will remember, Mr. Grey, that you have friends; that you will decide on nothing rash."

"Lady Madeleine," said Vivian, "I have too much respect for your feelings to stop even one moment to express the gratitude—the pride—the honourable pride, which your generous conduct allows me to feel. This moment repays me for a year of agony. I affect not to misunderstand one syllable of your meaning. My opinion, my detestation of the gaming-table has always, and must always, be the same. I do assure you this, and all things, upon my honour. Far from being involved, my cheek burns while I confess, that I am master of a considerable sum—a most considerable sum, acquired by this unhallowed practice. But for this I am scarcely to be blamed. You are yourself aware of the singular fortune which awaited my first evening at Ems; that fortune was continued at the New House, the very

first day I dined with his Highness, and when, unexpectedly, I was forced to play; that fatal fortune has rendered my attendance at the New House absolutely necessary. I found that it was impossible to keep away, without subjecting myself to the most painful observations. I need scarcely say now, that my depression of yesterday was occasioned by the receipt of letters from England; and as to my abstraction this morning, believe me, Lady Madeleine, it was not a state of mind which grew out of any disgust to the world, or its inhabitants. I am ashamed of having spoken so much about myself, and so little about those for whom you are more interested. As far as I can judge, you have no cause, at present, for any serious uneasiness with regard to Mr. St. George. You may, perhaps, have observed that we are not very intimate, and therefore I cannot speak with any precision as to the state of his fortunes; but I have reason to believe that they are by no means unfavourable. And now for the Baron, Lady Madeleine."

"Yes, yes!"

"I hardly know what I am to infer from your observations respecting him. I certainly should infer something extremely bad, were not I conscious, that, after the experience of five weeks, I, for one, have nothing to complain of him. The Baron, certainly, is fond of play—plays high, indeed. He has not had equal fortune at the New House as at the Redoute; at least I imagine so, for he has given me no cause to believe, in any way, that he is a loser; and I need not tell Lady Madeleine Trevor, that at the table of an Archduke, losses are instantly paid."

"Now that I know the truth—the joyful truth, Mr. Grey," said her ladyship, with great earnestness and animation; "I feel quite ashamed of my boldness; must I say my suspicions? But if you could only understand the relief, the ease, the happiness, I feel at this moment, I am sure you would not wonder that I prevailed upon myself to speak to you. It may still be in my power, however, to prevent evil."

"Yes—yes, certainly! After what has pas-

sed, I would, without any fear of my motives being misinterpreted, submit to your Ladyship, that the wisest course now, would be to speak to me frankly respecting Von Konigstein; and if you are aware of any thing which has passed in the circles in England, of a nature which may render it more prudent for——"

"Oh! stop, stop!" said Lady Madeleine, in the greatest agitation. Vivian was silent, and many minutes elapsed before his companion again spoke. When she did, her eyes were fixed on the ground, and her tones were low; but her voice was calm, and steady. It was evident that she had mastered her emotions.

"I am going to accept, Mr. Grey, the confidence which you have proffered me. I feel, I am convinced, that it is due to you now, that I should say all; but I do not affect to conceal that I speak, even now, with reluctance —an effort, and it will soon be over. It is for the best." Lady Madeleine paused one moment, and then resumed with a firm voice:—

"Upwards of six years, Mr. Grey, have now

passed since Baron von Konigstein was appointed Minister to London, from the Court of ————. Although apparently young for such an important mission, he had already eminently distinguished himself as a diplomatist; and with all the advantages of brilliant talents, various accomplishments, rank, reputation, person, and a fascinating address, I need not tell you, that he immediately became of consideration, even in the highest circles. Mr. Trevor—I was then just married—was at this period high in office, and was constantly in personal communication with the Baron. They became intimate, and his Excellency our constant guest. The Baron had the reputation of being a man of pleasure. Few men ever existed, for whose indiscretions there could be a greater excuse; nor had any thing ever transpired which could induce us to believe, that Baron von Konigstein could be guilty of any thing, but an indiscretion. At this period a relation, and former ward of Mr. Trevor's, a young man of considerable fortune, and one whom we all most fondly loved, resided in our family. Trevor, and myself, considered him as our brother. With this individual

Baron von Konigstein formed a strong friendship; they were seldom apart. Our relation was not exempted from the failings of all young men. He led a very dissipated, an alarmingly dissipated life; but he was very young; and, as unlike most relations, we never allowed any conduct on his part, for an instant to banish him from our society; we trusted that the contrast which his own family afforded to his usual companions, would in time render his tastes more refined, and his habits less irregular. We had now known Baron von Konigstein for upwards of a year and a half, most intimately. Nothing had transpired during this period to induce Mr. Trevor to alter the opinion which he had entertained of him from the first; he believed him to be a man of the purest honour, and, in spite of a few imprudencies, of the correctest principles. Whatever might have been my own opinion of his Excellency at this period, I had no reason to doubt the natural goodness of his disposition; and though I could not hope that he was one who would assist us in our plans for the reformation of Augustus, I still rejoiced to observe, that in the

Baron he would at least find a companion very different from the unprincipled and selfish beings by whom he was too often surrounded. Something occurred at this time, Mr. Grey, which it is necessary for me only to allude to; but which placed Baron von Konigstein, according to his own declaration, under the most lasting obligations to myself. In the warmth of his heart he asked if there was any real, and important service which he could do me. I took advantage of the moment to speak to him about our young friend; I detailed to him all our anxieties; he anticipated all my wishes, and promised to watch over him; to be his guardian; his friend—his real friend. Mr. Grey," continued her ladyship, " I struggle to restrain my feelings; but the recollections of this period of my life are so painful, that for a moment I must stop to recover myself."

For a few minutes they walked on in silence; Vivian did not speak, his heart was too full; and when her ladyship resumed her tale, he, unconsciously, pressed her arm.

" Mr. Grey, I study to be brief. About

three months after the Baron had given me the pledge which I mentioned, Mr. Trevor was called up at an early hour one morning with the alarming intelligence, that his late ward was supposed to be at the point of death at a neighbouring hotel. He instantly accompanied the messenger, and on the way the fatal truth was broken to him—our young friend had committed suicide! He had been playing all night with one whom I cannot now name." Here Lady Madeleine's voice died away, but with a struggle she again spoke firmly.

" I mean, Mr. Grey—with the Baron—some foreigners also, and an Englishman—all intimate friends of Von Konigstein, and scarcely known to Captain ———, I mean the deceased. Our friend had been the only sufferer; he had lost his whole fortune—and more than his fortune: and, with a heart full of despair and remorse, had, with his own hand, terminated his unhappy life. The whole circumstances were so suspicious, that public attention was keenly attracted, and Mr. Trevor spared no exertion to bring the offenders to punishment.

The Baron had the hardihood to call upon us the next day; admittance was, of course, refused. He wrote the most violent letters, protesting by all that was sacred that he was innocent; that he was asleep during most of the night, and accusing the others who were present of a conspiracy. The unhappy business now attracted universal attention. Its consequence on me was an alarming illness of a most unfortunate kind; I was therefore prevented from interfering, or, indeed, knowing any thing that took place; but Trevor informed me that the Baron was involved in a correspondence in the public prints; that the accused parties recriminated, and that finally he was convinced that Von Konigstein, if there were any difference, was, if possible, the most guilty. However this might be, he soon obtained his recall from his own Government. He wrote to myself, and to Trevor before he left England; but I was too ill to hear of his letters, until Mr. Trevor informed me that he had returned them unopened. And now, Mr. Grey, I am determined to give utterance to that which as yet has

always died upon my lips—the victim—the unhappy victim was the brother of Miss Fane!"

"Oh, God!"

"And Mr. St. George," continued Vivian, "Mr. St. George knowing all this, which surely he must have done; how came he to tolerate, for an instant, the advances of such a man?"

"My brother," said Lady Madeleine, "is a very good, a very excellent young man, with a kind heart and warm feelings; but my brother has not much knowledge of the world, and he is too honourable himself ever to believe that what he calls a gentleman can be dishonest. My brother was not in England when the unhappy event took place, and of course the various circumstances have not made the same impression upon him, as upon us. He has heard of the affair only from me; and young men, Mr. Grey, young men too often imagine that women are apt to exaggerate in matters of this nature, which, of course, few of us can understand. Von Konigstein had not the good feeling, or perhaps had not the power, connected as he was with the Archduke, to affect igno-

rance of our former acquaintance, or to avoid a second one. I was obliged formally to introduce him to my brother. I was quite perplexed how to act. I thought of writing to Von Konigstein the next morning, a letter—a calm letter; impressing upon him, without the expression of any hostile feeling, the utter impossibility of the acquaintance being renewed: but this proceeding involved a thousand difficulties. How was a man of his distinction—a man, who not only from his rank, but from his disposition, is always a remarkable, and a remarked character, wherever he may be,—how could he account to the Archduke, and to his numerous friends, for his not associating with a party with whom he was perpetually in contact. Explanations—painful explanations, and worse, much worse than these must have been the consequence. I could hardly expect him to leave Ems; it was, perhaps, out of his power: and for Miss Fane to leave Ems at this moment, was most strenuously prohibited by our physician. While I was doubtful and deliberating, the conduct of Von Konigstein himself pre-

vented me from taking any step whatever Feeling all the awkwardness of his situation, he seized, with eagerness, the opportunity of becoming intimate with a member of the family whom he had not before known. His amusing conversation, and insinuating address, immediately enlisted the feelings of my brother in his favour. You know yourself that the very morning after their introduction they were riding together. As they became more intimate, the Baron boldly spoke to St. George in confidence of his acquaintance with us in England, and of the unhappy circumstances which led to its termination. St. George was deceived by this seeming courage and candour. He has become the Baron's friend, and has adopted his version of the unhappy story; and as the Baron has had too much delicacy to allude to the affair in a defence of himself to me, he calculated that the representations of St. George, who he was conscious, would not preserve the confidence which Von Konigstein has always intended him to betray, would assist in producing in my mind an impression in his favour. The

Neapolitan story which he told the other day at dinner, was of himself; relating it, as he might with truth, of a gentleman of rank, who was obliged to leave England, he blinded all present, except Miss Fane and myself. I confess to you, Mr. Grey, that though I have not for a moment doubted the guilt of the Baron, still I was weak enough to consider that his desire to become reconciled to me was at least an evidence of a repentant heart; and the Neapolitan story deceived me. Women are so easily to be deceived. We always hail with such credulous pleasure the prospect of the amendment of a fellow creature. Actuated by these feelings, and acting as I thought wisest under existing circumstances, I ceased to discourage the attentions of the Baron to myself and my friends. Your acquaintance, which we all desired to cultivate, was another reason for enduring his presence. His subsequent conduct has undeceived me: I am convinced now, not only of his former guilt, but also that he is not changed; and that with his accustomed talent, he has been acting a part

which for some reason or other he has no longer any object in maintaining. Both Mr. Sherborne and myself have remonstrated with my brother; but the only consequence of our interference has been, that he has quarrelled with his uncle, and treated both my own and Miss Fane's interposition with indifference or irritability."

"And Miss Fane," said Vivian, "she must know all?"

"She knows nothing in detail; she was so young at the time, that we had no difficulty in keeping the particular circumstances of her brother's death, and the sensation which it excited, a secret from her. As she grew up, I have thought it proper that the mode of his death should no longer be concealed from her; and she has learnt from some incautious observations of St. George's, enough to make her look upon the Baron with horror. It is for Violet," continued Lady Madeleine, "that I have the severest apprehensions. For the last fortnight her anxiety for her cousin has produced an excitation of mind, which I look upon

with more dread than any thing that can happen to her. She has intreated both Mr. Sherborne and myself, to speak to St. George, and also to you, Mr. Grey; and, since our unsuccessful interference with my brother, we have been obliged to have recourse to deceit to calm her mind, and banish her apprehensions. Mr. Sherborne has persuaded her, that, at the New House, play is seldom pursued; and when pursued, that the limit is very moderate. The last few days she has become more easy and serene. She accompanies us to-night; the weather is so beautiful that the night air is scarcely to be feared; and a gay scene will, I am convinced, have a favourable influence upon her spirits. Your depression last night did not, however, escape her notice. Once more let me say how I rejoice at hearing what you have told me. I have such confidence in your honour, Mr. Grey, that I unhesitatingly believe all that you have said. I have such confidence in your sense and courage, Mr. Grey, that I have now no apprehensions for the future. For God's

sake, watch St. George. I have no fear for yourself."

Here they had reached home: Vivian parted with her ladyship at the door of her apartments, and pressed her hand as he refused to come in. He hastened to the solitude of his own chamber. His whole frame was in a tumult; he paced up and down his room with wild steps; he pressed his hand to his eyes to banish the disturbing light; and tried to call up the image of her who was lately speaking—of her, for whom alone he now felt that he must live. But what chance had he of ever gaining this glorious creature? what right? what claims? His brow alternately burnt with maddening despair, and exciting hope. How he cursed himself for his foul sacrifice of his talents! those talents, the proper exercise, the wise administration of which, might have placed happiness in his power,—the enjoyment of a state of feeling, whose existence he had once ridiculed, because his imperfect moral sense was incapable of comprehending it,—once, and once only, it darted

across his mind, that feelings of mere friendship could not have dictated this confidence, and occasioned this anxiety on her part; but the soft thought dwelt on his soul only for an instant—as the shadow of a nightingale flits over the moonlit moss.

CHAPTER XII.

The company at the Archduke's fête was *most select;* that is to say, it consisted of every single person who was then at the Baths: those who had been presented to his Highness, having the privilege of introducing any number of their friends; and those who had no friend to introduce them, purchasing tickets at an enormous price from Cracowsky—the wily Polish Intendant. The entertainment was most imperial; no expense, and no exertion were spared to make the hired lodging-house look like an hereditary palace; and for a week previous to the great evening, the whole of the neighbouring town of Wisbaden, the little capital of the duchy, had been put under contribution. What

a harvest for Cracowsky!—What a commission from the *restaurateur* for supplying the refreshments!—What a per-centage on hired mirrors and dingy hangings!

The Archduke, covered with orders, received every one with the greatest condescension, and made to each of his guests a most flattering speech. His suite, in new uniforms, simultaneously bowed directly the flattering speech was finished.

"Madame von Furstenburg, I feel the greatest pleasure in seeing you. My greatest pleasure is to be surrounded by my friends. Madame von Furstenburg, I trust that your amiable and delightful family are quite well.—[The party passed on.] Cravatischeff!" continued his Highness, inclining his head round to one of his aid-de-camps; "Cravatischeff! a very fine woman is Madame von Furstenburg. There are few women whom I more admire than Madame von Furstenburg."

"Prince Salvinski, I feel the greatest pleasure in seeing you. My greatest pleasure is to be surrounded by my friends. Poland honours

no one more than Prince Salvinski. Cravatischeff! a remarkable bore is Prince Salvinski. There are few men of whom I have a greater terror than Prince Salvinski."

"Baron von Konigstein, I feel the greatest pleasure in seeing you. My greatest pleasure is to be surrounded by my friends. Baron von Konigstein, I have not yet forgot the story of the fair Venetian. Cravatischeff! an uncommonly pleasant fellow is Baron von Konigstein. There are few men whose company I more enjoy than Baron von Konigstein's."

"Count von Altenburgh, I feel the greatest pleasure in seeing you. My greatest pleasure is to be surrounded by my friends. You will not forget to give me your opinion of my Austrian troop. Cravatischeff! a very good billiard player is Count von Altenburgh. There are few men whose play I 'd sooner bet upon than Count von Altenburgh's."

"Lady Madeleine Trevor, I feel the greatest pleasure in seeing you. My greatest pleasure is to be surrounded by my friends. Miss Fane, your servant—Mr. Sherborne—Mr. St.

George—Mr. Grey. Cravatischeff! a most splendid woman is Lady Madeleine Trevor. There is no woman whom I more admire than Lady Madeleine Trevor; and Cravatischeff! Miss Fane, too! a remarkably fine girl is Miss Fane."

The great saloon of the New House afforded excellent accommodation for the dancers. It opened on the gardens, which, though not very large, were tastefully laid out; and were this evening brilliantly illuminated with coloured lamps. In the smaller saloon, the Austrian troop amused those who were not fascinated by waltz or quadrille, with acting proverbes: the regular dramatic performance was thought too heavy a business for the evening. There was sufficient amusement for all; and those who did not dance, and to whom proverbes were no novelty, walked and talked, stared at others, and were themselves stared at; and this perhaps was the greatest amusement of all. Baron von Konigstein did certainly to-night look neither like an unsuccessful gamester, nor a designing villain. Among many who were really amusing,

he was the most so; and apparently without the least consciousness of it, attracted the admiration of all. To the Trevor party he had attached himself immediately, and was constantly at her ladyship's side, introducing to her, in the course of the evening, his own and Mr. St. George's particular friends—Mr. and Mrs. Fitzloom. Among many smiling faces, Vivian Grey's was clouded; the presence of the Baron annoyed him. When they first met, he was conscious that he was stiff and cool—extraordinarily cool. One moment's reflection convinced him of the folly of his conduct, and he made a struggle to be very civil—extraordinarily civil. In five minutes time he had involuntarily insulted the Baron, who stared at his friend, and evidently did not comprehend him.

"Grey," said his Excellency, very quietly, "you 're not in a good humour to-night. What 's the matter? This is not at all a temper to come to a *fête* in. What! won't Miss Fane dance with you?" asked the Baron, with an arch smile.

"I wonder what can induce your Excellency to talk such nonsense!"

"Your Excellency!—by Jove! that's good, Excellency! why, what the deuce is the matter with the man. It is Miss Fane then—eh?"

"Baron Von Konigstein I wish you to understand ——"

"My dear fellow, I never could understand any thing. I think you have insulted me in a most disgraceful manner, and I positively must call you out, unless you promise to dine at my rooms with me to-morrow, to meet de Bœffleurs."

"I cannot."

"Why not? you've no engagement with Lady Madeleine I know, for St. George has agreed to come."

"Yes?"

"De Bœffleurs leaves Ems next week. It is sooner than he expected, and I wish to have a quiet evening together before he goes. I should be very vexed if you were not there. We've scarcely been enough together lately. What with the New House in the evening, and

riding parties in the morning, and those Fitzloom girls, with whom St. George is playing a most foolish game—he 'll be taken in now, if he 's not on his guard—we really never meet, at least not in a quiet friendly way; and so now, will you come?"

"St. George is positively coming?"

"Oh yes? positively; don't be afraid of his gaining ground on the little Violet in your absence."

"Well, then, my dear Von Konigstein, I will come."

"Well, that 's yourself again. It made me quite unhappy, to see you look so sour and melancholy; one would have thought that I was some troublesome bore, Prince Salvinski at least, by the way you spoke to me. Well, mind you come—it 's a promise:—good. I must go and say just one word to the lovely little Saxon, and by the bye, Grey, one word before I 'm off. List to a friend, you 're on the wrong scent about Miss Fane; St. George, I think, has no chance there, and now no wish to succeed. The game 's your own, if you like; trust my

word, she's an angel. The good powers prosper you!" so saying, the Baron ran off.

Mr. St. George had danced with Miss Fane the only quadrille in which Lady Madeleine allowed her to join. He was now waltzing with Aurelia Fitzloom, and was at the head of a band of adventurous votaries of Terpsichore; who, wearied with the common-place convenience of a saloon, had ventured to invoke the Muse on the lawn.

"A most interesting sight, Lady Madeleine Trevor!" said Mr. Fitzloom, as he offered his arm to her ladyship, and advised their instant presence as patrons of the "*Fête du Village*," for such Baron Von Konigstein had most happily termed it. "A delightful man that Baron Von Konigstein, and says such delightful things! *Fête du Village!* how very good!"

"That is Miss Fitzloom then, whom my brother is waltzing with?" asked Lady Madeleine in her usual kind tone.

"Not exactly, my Lady Madeleine," said Mr. Fitzloom, "not exactly *Miss* Fitzloom, rather Miss Aurelia Fitzloom, my third daugh-

ter; *our third eldest*, as Mrs. Fitzloom sometimes says; for really it is necessary to distinguish, with such a family as ours, you know, my Lady Madeleine!"

"But don't you think, Mr. Fitzloom, that your *third* daughter is a sufficiently definite description?" asked her ladyship.

"Why you know, my Lady Madeleine, there *might* be a mistake. There 's the third youngest! and if one say the *third* merely, why, as Mrs. Fitzloom sometimes says, the question is, *which is which?*"

"That view of the case, I confess, did not strike me before."

"Mr. Grey," said Miss Fane, for she was now leaning upon his arm: "have you any objection to walk up and down the terrace? the evening is deliciously soft, but even with the protection of a Cachemere I scarcely dare venture to stand still. Lady Madeleine seems very much engaged at present. What amusing people these Fitzlooms are!"

"Mrs. Fitzloom; I 've not heard her voice yet."

"No; Mrs. Fitzloom does not talk. St. George says she makes it a rule never to speak in the presence of a stranger. She deals plenteously, however, at home in domestic apothegms. If you could but hear him imitating them all!—Whenever she does speak, she finishes all her sentences by confessing that she is conscious of her own deficiencies; but that she has taken care to give her daughters the very best education. They are what St. George calls fine dashing girls, and I 'm very glad he 's made friends with them; for, after all, he must find it rather dull here. By the bye, Mr. Grey, I 'm afraid that you can't find this evening very amusing; the absence of a favourite pursuit always makes a sensible void; and these walls must remind you of more piquant pleasures than waltzing with fine London ladies, or promenading up a dull terrace with an invalid."

"Miss Fane, I fear that you are a bitter satirist; but I assure you that you are quite misinformed as to the mode in which I generally pass my evenings."

"I hope I am, Mr. Grey!" said Miss Fane, in rather a serious tone; "I wish I could also be mistaken in my suspicions of the mode in which St. George spends his time. He's sadly changed. For the first month that we were here, he seemed to prefer nothing in the world to our society, and now—— I was nearly saying that we had not seen him for one single evening these three weeks. I cannot understand what you find at this house of such absorbing interest. Although I know you think I am much mistaken in my suspicions, still I feel very anxious, very anxious indeed. I spoke to St. George to-day, but he scarcely answered me; or said that, which it was a pleasure for me to forget."

"Mr. St. George should feel highly gratified in having excited such an interest in the — mind of Miss Fane."

"He cannot—he should not feel more gratified than all who are my friends; for all who are such, I must ever experience the liveliest interest."

"How happy must those be who feel that they have a right to count Miss Fane among their friends!"

"I have the pleasure then, I assure you, of making many happy, and among them Mr. Grey."

Vivian was surprised that he did not utter some usual complimentary answer; but he knew not why, the words stuck in his throat; and instead of speaking, he was thinking of what had been spoken. In a second he had mentally repeated Miss Fane's answer a thousand times—it rang in his ears—it thrilled his blood. In another moment he was ashamed of being such a fool.

"How brilliant are these gardens!" said Vivian, looking at the sky.

"Very brilliant!" said Violet Fane, looking on the ground. Conversation seemed nearly extinct, and yet neither offered to turn back.

"Good heavens! you are ill, Miss Fane," suddenly exclaimed Vivian, when, on accidentally turning to his companion, he found she was in tears. "Shall we go back, or will you

wait here?—Can I fetch any thing?—I fear you are very ill!"

"No, no! not very ill, but very foolish; let us walk on, Mr. Grey, walk on—walk on." Here Vivian thought that she was going into hysterics; but heaving a deep sigh, she seemed suddenly to recover.

"I am ashamed, Mr. Grey, of myself—this trouble, this foolishness—what can you think? but I am so agitated, so nervous—I hope you'll forget——I hope——."

"Perhaps the air has suddenly affected you—had we not better go in?—Pray, pray compose yourself. I trust that nothing I have said—that nothing has happened—that no one has dared to say, or do, any thing to offend you—to annoy you? Speak, pray speak, Miss Fane—dear Miss Fane, the—the—"——the words died on Vivian's lips, yet a power he could not withstand urged him to speak—"the—the—the Baron?"

"Oh!" almost shrieked Miss Fane—"No, no, stop one second—let me compose myself—an effort, and I must be well—nothing, nothing

has happened, and no one has done or said any thing; but it is of something that should be said—of something that should be done, that I was thinking, and it overcame me."

"Miss Fane," said Vivian, "if there be any service which I can do—any advice which I can give—any possible way that I can exert myself for you, oh, speak!—oh, speak!—speak with the most perfect confidence—with firmness—with courage; do not fear that your motives will be misconceived—that your purpose will be misinterpreted—that your confidence will be misunderstood. You are addressing one who would lay down his life for you—who is willing to perform all your commands, and forget them when performed. I beseech you to trust me—believe me that you shall not repent."

She answered not, but holding down her head, covered her face with her small white hand; her lovely face which was crimsoned with her flashing blood. They were now at the end of the terrace—to return was impossible. If they remained stationary, they must be perceived and joined. What was to be done!

Oh moment of agony!—He led her down a solitary walk still further from the house. As they proceeded in silence, the bursts of the music, and the loud laughter of the joyous guests became fainter and fainter, till at last the sounds died away into echo—and echo into silence.

A thousand thoughts dashed through Vivian's mind in rapid succession; but a painful one —a most painful one to him, to any man,—always remained the last. His companion would not speak; yet to allow her to return home without freeing her mind of the burthen, the fearful burthen, which evidently overwhelmed it, was impossible. At length he broke a silence which seemed to have lasted an age.

"Miss Fane, do not believe for an instant that I am taking advantage of an agitating moment, to extract from you a confidence which you may repent. I feel assured that I am right in supposing that you have contemplated in a calmer moment the possibility of my being of service to you; that, in short, there is something in which you require my assistance,

my co-operation—an assistance, Miss Fane—a co-operation, which, if it produce any benefit to you, will make me at length feel that I have not lived in vain. I cannot, I cannot allow any feelings of false delicacy to prevent me from assisting you in giving utterance to thoughts, which you have owned it is absolutely necessary should be expressed. Remember, remember that you have allowed me to believe that we are friends: do not, do not prove by your silence, that we are friends only in name."

"I am overwhelmed—I cannot speak—my face burns with shame; I have miscalculated my strength of mind—perhaps my physical strength; what, what must you think of me?" She spoke in a low and smothered voice."

"Think of you, Miss Fane! every thing which the most devoted respect dare think of an object which it reverences.—Oh! understand me; do not believe that I am one who would presume an instant on my situation—because I have accidentally witnessed a young and lovely woman betrayed into a display of feeling which the artificial forms of cold society cannot

contemplate, and dare to ridicule. You are speaking to one who also has felt; who, though a man, has wept; who can comprehend sorrow; who can understand the most secret sensations of an agitated spirit. Dare to trust me. Be convinced that hereafter, neither by word, nor look, hint, nor sign on my part, shall you feel, save by your own wish, that you have appeared to Vivian Grey in any other light than as the accomplished Miss Fane, the idol of an admiring circle."

"You are too, too good—generous, generous man, I dare trust any thing to you that I dare trust to human being; but, ——" here her voice died away.

"Miss Fane, it is a painful, a most painful thing for me to attempt to guess your thoughts, or anticipate your confidence; but, if—if—if it be of Mr. St. George that you are thinking, have no fear respecting him—have no fear about his present situation—trust to me that there shall be no anxiety for his future one. I will be his unknown guardian, his unseen

friend; the promoter of your wishes, the protector of your——"

"No, no, Mr. Grey," said Miss Fane, with firmness, and looking quickly up, as if her mind were relieved by discovering that all this time Vivian had never imagined she was thinking of him. "No, no, Mr. Grey, you are mistaken; it is not of Mr. St. George, of Mr. St. George only, that I am thinking. I—I—I am much better now; I shall be able in an instant to speak—be able, I trust, to forget how foolish—how very foolish I have been."

"Let us walk on," continued Miss Fane; "let us walk on; we can easily account for our absence if it be remarked; and it is better, much better, that it should be all over: I feel quite well, quite, quite well; and shall be able to speak quite firmly now."

"Do not hurry; compose yourself, I beseech you; there is no fear of our absence being remarked, Lady Madeleine is so surrounded."

"After what has passed, Mr. Grey, it seems ridiculous in me to apologize, as I had intended, for speaking to you on a graver subject than

what has generally formed the point of conversation between us. I feared that you might misunderstand the motives which have dictated my conduct: I have attempted not to appear agitated, and I have been overcome. I trust that you will not be offended if I recur to the subject of the New House. Do not believe that I ever would have allowed my fears, my girlish fears, so to have overcome my discretion,—so to have overcome, indeed, all propriety of conduct on my part,—as to have induced me to have sought an interview with you, to moralize to you about your mode of life. No, no, it is not of this that I wish to speak, or rather that I will speak. I will hope, I will pray, that St. George and yourself have never found in that which you have followed as an amusement, the source, the origin, the cause of a single unhappy, or even anxious moment; Mr. Grey, I will believe all this."

"Dearest Miss Fane, believe it, believe it with confidence. Of St. George, I can with sincerity aver, that it is my firm opinion, that far from being involved, his fortune is not in

the slightest degree injured. Believe me, I will not attempt to quiet you now, as I would have done at any other time, by telling you that you magnify your fears, and allow your feelings to exaggerate the danger which exists. There has been danger—there is danger ;—play, very high, tremendously high play, has been, and is pursued at this New House, but Mr. St. George has never been a loser ; and, believe me, if the exertions of man can avail, never shall—never shall at least unfairly. Of the other individual, Miss Fane, whom you have honoured by the interest which you have kindly professed in his welfare, allow me to say one word : no one can detest, more thoroughly detest, any practice which exists in this world—Miss Fane cannot detest impurity with a more perfect antipathy—than he does the gaming-table. You know the miserable, but miraculous fortune, which made my first night here notorious. My luck has stuck by me like a curse ; and from the customs of society, from which it is impossible to emancipate ourselves, a man in my situation

cannot cease to play without incurring a slur upon his reputation. You will smile at a reputation which depends almost upon the commission of a vile folly; we have not time to argue these subtile points at present. It is sufficient for me to say, that I cannot resist this custom without being prepared to chastise the insolence of those who will consequently insult me. In that case, my reputation, already tarnished by the non-commission of a folly, will, according to the customs of society, be utterly ruined, unless it be re-burnished by the commission of a crime. I have no pistol now, Miss Fane, for my fellow-creatures,—my right hand is still red with the blood of my friend. To play therefore, with me has been a duty: I still win—the duty continues—but, believe me, that I shall never lose; and I look forward with eagerness to the moment when this thraldom shall cease."

"Oh! you've made me so happy! I feel so persuaded that you have not deceived me—the tones of your voice, your manner, your

expression, convince me that you have been sincere, and that I am happy—happy at least for the present."

"For ever I trust, Miss Fane."

"Let me, let me now prevent all future misery—let me speak about that which has long dwelt on my mind like a nightmare—about that which I did fear it was almost too late to speak. Not of your pursuit, Mr. Grey—not even of that fatal and horrid pursuit, do I now think, but of your companion in this amusement, in all amusements—it is he, he that I dread, that I look upon with horror, even to him, I cannot say, with hatred!"

"The Baron!" said Vivian, calmly.

"I cannot name him—Oh! dread him, fear him, avoid him! it is he that I mean, he of whom I thought that you were the victim. Possessing, as he does, all the qualifications which apparently would render a man's society desirable—you must have been surprised, you must have wondered at our conduct towards him. Oh! Mr. Grey, when Lady Madeleine turned from him with coolness, when she an-

swered him in tones which to you might have appeared harsh; she behaved to him, in comparison to what is his due, and what we sometimes feel to be our duty, with affection—actually with affection and regard. Oh! no human being can know what horror is, until he looks upon a fellow-creature with the eyes that I look upon that man." She leant upon Vivian's arm with her whole weight, and even then he thought she must have sunk—neither spoke. How solemn is the silence of sorrow!

"I am overcome," continued Miss Fane; "the remembrance of what he has done overwhelms me—I cannot speak it—the recollection is death—yet you must know it. That you might know it, I have before attempted. I wished to have spared myself the torture which I now endure. It would perhaps have been more consistent with my dignity, it would perhaps have been more correct, to have been silent—but I felt it—I felt it a duty which I owed to a fellow-creature—and your conduct, your kind, your generous conduct to me this evening, repays me even for all this pain.

You must know it, you must know it. I will write—ay! that will do. I will write—I cannot speak now, it is impossible, but beware of him; you, you are so young!"

"I have no words now to thank you, Miss Fane, for this. Had I been the victim of von Konigstein, I should have been repaid for all my misery by feeling that you regretted its infliction; but I trust that I am in no danger:—though young, though very young, I fear that I am one who must not count my time by calendars. I may truly say of myself, 'an aged interpreter, though young in days.' Would that I could be deceived! Fear not for your cousin. Trust to one whom you have made think better of this world, and of his fellow-creatures."

The sound of approaching footsteps, and the light laugh of pleasure, told of some who were wandering like themselves.

"We had better return," said Miss Fane; "I fear that Lady Madeleine will observe that I look unwell.—Some one approaches!—No!—

they pass only the top of the walk." It was St. George and Aurelia Fitzloom.

Quick flew the brilliant hours; and soon the dance was over, and the music mute. Lady Madeleine Trevor and Miss Fane retired long before the party broke up, and Vivian accompanied them and Mr. Sherborne. He did not return to the gay saloon, but found himself walking in the same gardens, by the side of the same river, lighted by the same moon, and listening to the same nightingale, as on the preceding night. How much had happened to him in the course of one day's circle! How changed were his feelings; not merely from yesternight, but even from a few hours since. She loved him!—yes, she must love him. All was forgotten: he felt as if his dilated soul despised its frail and impure tenement. Now, indeed, he was in love. The interview with Violet Fane came, after his conversation with Lady Madeleine, like incense after music. Think not that he was fickle, inconstant, capricious; his love for the first had insensibly grown

out of his admiration of the other; as a man gazing on a magnificent sunset, remains, when the heavens have ceased to glow, with his eyes fixed on the Evening star.

It was late when he retired. As he opened his door he was surprised to find lights in his chamber. The figure of a man appeared seated at the table. It moved—it was Essper George.

CHAPTER XIII.

The reader will remember that Vivian had agreed to dine, on the day after the fête, with the Baron, in his private apartments. This was an arrangement which, in fact, the custom of the house did not permit; but the irregularities of great men who are attended by Chasseurs, are occasionally winked at by a supple maître d'hôtel. Vivian had various reasons for not regretting his acceptance of the invitation; and he never shook hands with the Chevalier de Bœffleurs, apparently, with greater cordiality, than on the day on which he met him at dinner at the Baron von Konigstein's. Mr. St. George had not arrived.

"Past five!" said his Excellency; "riding

out, I suppose, with the Fitzlooms. Aurelia is certainly a fine girl; but I should think that Lady Madeleine would hardly approve the connexion. The St. Georges have blood in their veins; and would, I suppose, as soon think of marrying a Fitzloom, as we Germans should of marrying a woman without a *von* before her name. We 're quite alone, Grey, only the Chevalier and St. George. I had an idea of asking Salvinski; but he is such a regular steam-engine, and began such a long story last night about his interview with the King of Ashantee, that the bare possibility of his taking it into his head to finish it to-day frightened me. You were away early from the Archduke's last night. The business went off well."

"Very well, indeed!" said the Chevalier de Bœffleurs; completing by this speech the first dozen of words which he had uttered since his stay at Ems.

"I think that last night Lady Madeleine Trevor looked perfectly magnificent; and a certain lady too, Grey, eh?—Here 's St. George. My dear fellow, how are you? Has the fair

Aurelia recovered from the last night's fatigues? All in that quarter goes on quite well, I hope. Now, Ernstorff—dinner, as soon as possible."

The Baron made up to-day, certainly, for the silence of his friend, the Chevalier. He outdid himself. Story after story, adventure after adventure, followed each other with the most exciting haste. In fact, the Baron never ceased talking the whole dinner, except when he refreshed himself with wine, which he drank copiously. A nice observer would perhaps have considered the Baron's high spirits artificial, and his conversation an effort. Yet his Excellency's temper, though lively, was generally equable; and his ideas, which always appeared to occur easily, were usually thrown out in fluent phraseology. The dinner was long, and a great deal of wine was drunk; more, much more, than most of the parties present for a long time had been accustomed to. About eight o'clock the Chevalier proposed going to the Redoute, but the Baron objected.

"Let 's have an evening altogether: surely we 've had enough of the Redoute. In my opinion one of the advantages of the fête is, that

there is no New House to-night. Conversation is a novelty. On a moderate calculation, I must have told you to-day at least two thousand original anecdotes. I 've done my duty. It 's the Chevalier's turn now. Come, de Bœffleurs —a choice one !"

" I remember a story Prince Salvinski once told me."

" No, no—that 's too bad—none of that Polish bear's romances; if we have his stories, we may as well have his company."

" But it 's a very curious story," continued the Chevalier, with a little animation.

" Oh ! so is every story, according to the storier."

" I think, von Konigstein, you imagine no one can tell a story but yourself," said de Bœffleurs, actually indignant. Vivian had never heard him speak so much before, and really began to believe that he was not quite an automaton.

" Let 's have it !" said St. George.

" It 's a story told of a Polish nobleman—a Count somebody:—I never can remember their

crack-jaw names. Well! the point is this," said the silent little Chevalier, who apparently, already repented of the boldness of his offer, and, misdoubting his powers, wished to begin with the end of his tale "the point is this—he was playing one day at *écarté* with the Governor of Wilna—the stake was trifling; but he had a bet, you see, with the Governor of a thousand roubles; a bet with the Governor's secretary—never mind the amount, say two hundred and fifty, you see; then, he went on the turn-up with the Commandant's wife; and took the pips on the trumps with the Archbishop of Warsaw. To understand the point of the story, you see, you must have a distinct conception how the game stood. You see, St. George, there was the bet with the Governor, one thousand roubles; the Governor's secretary,—never mind the amount, say two hundred and fifty; the turn-up with the Commandant's lady, and the pips with the Archbishop of Warsaw. Proposed three times—one for the king—the Governor drew ace—the Governor was already three and the ten. When the Governor scored king,

the Archbishop gave the odds—drew knave queen one hand—the Count offered to propose fourth time—Governor refused. King to six, ace fell to knave—queen cleared on—Governor lost, besides bets with the whole etat-major; the Secretary gave his bill; the Commandant's lady pawned her jewels; and the Archbishop was done on the pips!"

"By Jove, what a Salvinski!"

"How many trumps had the Governor?" asked St. George.

"Three," said the Chevalier.

"Then it 's impossible: I don't believe the story; it couldn't be."

"I beg your pardon," said the Chevalier; "you see the Governor had—"

"For heaven's sake, don't let us have it all over again!" said the Baron. "Well! if this be your model for an after-dinner anecdote, which ought to be as piquant as an anchovy toast, I 'll never complain of your silence in future. I 'm sure you never learnt this in the Palais Royal!"

"The story 's a true story," said the Chevalier;

" have you got a pack of cards, von Konigstein? I 'll show it you."

" There is not such a thing in the room," said the Baron.

" Well, I never heard of a room without a pack of cards before," said the Chevalier; " I 'll send for one to my own apartments."

" Oh! by-the-bye, perhaps Ernstorff has got a pack. Here Ernstorff, have you got a pack of cards? That 's good; bring it immediately."

The cards were brought, and the Chevalier began to fight his battle over again; but could not satisfy Mr. St. George. " You see there was the bet with the Governor, and the pips, as I said before, with the Archbishop of Warsaw."

" My dear de Bœffleurs, let 's no more of this. If you like to have a game of *écarté* with St. George, well and good; but as for quarrelling the whole evening about some blundering lie of Salvinski's, it really is too much. You two can play, and I can talk to Don Vivian, who, by-the-bye, is rather of the rueful countenance to-night. Why, my dear fellow, I

haven't heard your voice this evening:—frightened by the fate of the Archbishop of Warsaw, I suppose?"

"*Ecarté* is so devilish dull," said St. George; "and it 's such a trouble to deal."

"I 'll deal for both, if you like," said de Bœffleurs; "I 'm used to dealing."

"Oh! no—I won't play *écarté;* let 's have something in which we can all join."

"Rouge-et-Noir," suggested the Chevalier, in a careless tone, as if he had no taste for the amusement.

"There isn't enough—is there?" asked St. George.

"Oh! two are enough, you know—one deals,—much more four."

"Well, I don't care—Rouge-et-Noir then—let 's have Rouge-et-Noir:—von Konigstein, what say you to Rouge-et-Noir? De Bœffleurs says we can play it here very well. Come, Grey!"

"Oh! Rouge-et-Noir, Rouge-et-Noir," said the Baron; "haven't you both had Rouge-et-Noir enough? A'n't I to be allowed one holiday?

Well! any thing to please you; so Rouge-et-Noir, if it must be so."

"If all wish it, I have no objection," said Vivian.

"Well then, let's sit down; Ernstorff has, I dare say, another pack of cards, and St. George will be dealer, I know he likes that ceremony."

"No, no, I appoint the Chevalier."

"Very well," said de Bœffleurs; "the plan will be for two to bank against the table; the table to play on the same colour by joint agreement. You can join me, von Konigstein, and pay or receive with me, from Mr. St. George and Grey."

"I'll bank with you, if you like, Chevalier," said Vivian, very quietly.

"Oh! certainly Mr. Grey—certainly, Grey—most certainly; that is if you like:—but perhaps the Baron is more used to banking; you perhaps don't understand it."

"Perfectly; it appears to me to be very simple."

"No—don't you bank, Grey," said St.

George; "I want you to play with me against the Chevalier and the Baron—I like your luck."

"Luck is very capricious, remember, Mr. St. George."

"Oh, no! I like your luck; I like your luck—don't bank."

"Be it so."

Playing commenced: an hour elapsed, and the situation of none of the parties was materially different to what it had been when they began the game. Vivian proposed leaving off; but Mr. St. George avowed that he felt very fortunate, and that he had a presentiment that he should win. Another hour elapsed, and he had lost considerably.—Eleven o'clock.—Vivian's luck had also deserted him. Mr. St. George was losing desperately—Midnight—Vivian had lost back half his gains on the season. St. George still more desperate; all his coolness had deserted him. He had persisted obstinately against a run on the red; then floundered, and got entangled in a see-saw, which alone cost him a thousand.

Ernstorff now brought in refreshments; and for a moment they ceased playing. The Baron opened a bottle of champaign; and St. George and the Chevalier were stretching their legs and composing their minds in very different ways—the first in walking rapidly up and down the room, and the other by lying very quietly at his full length on the sofa. Vivian was employed in building houses with the cards.

"Grey," said the Chevalier de Bœffleurs; "I can't imagine why you don't for a moment try to forget the cards; that's the only way to win. Never sit musing over the table."

But Grey was not to be persuaded to give up building his pagoda; which, now many stories high, like a more celebrated, but scarcely more substantial structure, fell with a crash. Vivian collected the scattered cards into two divisions.

"Now!" said the Baron, seating himself; "for St. George's revenge."

The Chevalier, and the greatest sufferer took their places.

"Is Ernstorff coming in again, Baron?" asked Vivian, very calmly.

"No! I think not."

"Let us be sure: it's disagreeable to be disturbed at this time of night, and so interested as we are."

"Lock the door, then," said St. George.

"A very good plan," said Vivian; and he locked it accordingly.

"Now gentlemen," said Vivian, rising from the table, and putting both packs of cards into his pocket—"Now gentlemen, I have another game to play." The Chevalier started on his chair—the Baron turned quite pale, but both were silent. "Mr. St. George," continued Vivian; "I think that you are in debt to the Chevalier de Bœffleurs, upwards of two thousand pounds; and to Baron von Konigstein, something more than half that sum. I have to inform you, Sir, that it is utterly unnecessary for you to satisfy the claims of either of these gentlemen, which are founded neither in law, nor in honour."

"Mr. Grey, what am I to understand?"

asked the quiet Chevalier de Bœffleurs, with the air of a wolf, and the voice of a lion.

"Understand Sir!" answered Vivian, sternly; "that I am not one who will be bullied by a black-leg."

"Grey! good God! Grey! what do you mean?" asked the Baron.

"That which it is my duty, not my pleasure, to explain, Baron von Konigstein."

"If you mean to insinuate," burst forth the Chevalier, "if you mean to insinuate—"

"I mean to insinuate nothing, Sir; I leave insinuations and inuendos to shuffling *chevaliers d'industrie.* I mean to prove every thing."

Mr. St. George did not speak, but seemed as utterly astounded and overwhelmed as Baron von Konigstein himself; who, with his arm leaning on the table, his hands clasped, and the forefinger of his right hand playing convulsively on his left, was pale as death, and did not even breathe.

"Gentlemen," said Vivian, "I shall not detain you long, though I have much to say that is to the purpose. I am perfectly cool, and

believe me, perfectly resolute. Let me recommend to you all the same temperament—it may be better for you. Rest assured, that if you flatter yourselves that I am one to be pigeoned, and then bullied, you are mistaken. In one word, I am aware of every thing that has been arranged for the reception of Mr. St. George and myself this evening. Your marked cards are in my pocket, and can only be obtained by you with my life. Here are two of us against two; we are equally matched in number, and I, gentlemen, am armed. If I were not, you would not dare to go to extremities. Is it not, then, the wisest course to be temperate, my friends?"

"This is some vile conspiracy of your own, fellow," said de Bœffleurs; "marked cards indeed! a pretty tale, forsooth! The Ministers of a first-rate power playing with marked cards! The story will gain credit, and on the faith of whom? An adventurer that no one knows; who, having failed this night in his usual tricks, and lost money which he cannot pay, takes

advantage of the marked cards, which he has not succeeded in introducing, and pretends, forsooth, that they are those which he has stolen from our table; our own cards being, previously to his accusation, concealed in a secret pocket."

The impudence of the fellow staggered even Vivian. As for Mr. St. George, he stared like a wild man. Before Vivian could answer him, the Baron had broke silence. It was with the greatest effort that he seemed to dig his words out of his breast.

"No—no—this is too much! it is all over! I am lost; but I will not add crime to crime. Your courage and your fortune have saved you Mr. Grey, and your friend, from the designs of villains. And you! wretch," said he, turning to De Bœffleurs, "sleep now in peace—at length you have undone me." He leant on the table, and buried his face in his hands.

"Chicken-hearted fool!" said the Chevalier; "is this the end of all your promises, and all your pledges? But remember, Sir! remem-

ber. I have no taste for scenes. Good night, gentlemen. Baron, I expect to hear from *you.*"

"Stop, Sir!" said Vivian; "no one leaves this room without my permission."

"I am at your service, Sir, when you please," said the Chevalier, throwing down his card.

"It is not my intention to detain you long, Sir; far from it; I have every inclination to assist you in your last exit from this room, had I time, it should not be by the door; as it is, go! in the devil's name." So saying, he hurled the adventurous Frenchman half down the corridor.

"Baron von Konigstein," said Vivian, turning to the Baron; "you have proved yourself, by your conduct this evening, to be a better man than I imagined you. I confess that I thought you had been too much accustomed to such scenes, to be sensible of the horror of detection."

"Never!" said the Baron, with emphasis, with energy. The firm voice and manner in

which he pronounced this single word, wonderfully contrasted with his delivery when he had last spoke, but his voice immediately died away.

"'Tis all over! 'tis all over! I have no wish to excite your pity, gentlemen, or to gain your silence, by practising upon your feelings. Be silent; I am not the less ruined; not the less disgraced; not the less utterly undone. Be silent; my honour, all the same in four and twenty hours, has gone for ever: I have no motive then to deceive you. You must believe what I speak; even what *I* speak, the most degraded, the vilest of men. I say again, *never*, never, never, never, never was my honour before sullied, though guilty of a thousand follies. You see before you, gentlemen, the unhappy victim of circumstances; of circumstances which he has in vain struggled to control; to which he has at length fallen a victim. I am not pretending, for a moment, that my crimes are to be accounted for by an inexorable fate, and not to be expiated by my everlasting misery: No, no! I have been too weak to be

virtuous: but I have been tried; tried most bitterly. I am the most unfortunate of men; I was not born to be a villain. Four years have passed since I was banished from the country in which I was honoured; my prospects in life blasted; my peace of mind destroyed; and all because a crime was committed, of any participation in which I am as innocent as yourselves. Driven in despair to wander, I tried, in the wild dissipation of Naples, to forget my existence, and my misery. I found my Fate in the person of this vile Frenchman, who never since has quitted me. Even after two years of madness in that fatal place, my natural disposition rallied; I struggled to save myself; I quitted it. I was already involved to De Bœffleurs; I became still more so, in gaining from him the means of satisfying all claims against me. Alas! I found I had sold myself to a scoundrel; a most unadulterated villain; a devil, a very devil; with a heart like an adder's. Incapable of a stray generous sensation, he has looked upon mankind during his whole life, with the eyes of a bully of a gaming-house. I still

struggled to free myself from this man; and I indemnified him for his advances, by procuring him a place in the mission to which, with the greatest difficulty and perseverance, I had at length procured my appointment. In public life I yet hoped to forget my private misery. At Frankfort I felt, that though not happy, I might be calm. I determined never again even to run the risk of enduring the slavery of debt. I forswore, with the most solemn oaths, the gaming table; and had it not been for the perpetual sight of De Bœffleurs, I might, perhaps, have felt at ease; though the remembrance of my blighted prospects, the eternal feeling that I experienced of being born for nobler ends, was quite sufficient perpetually to embitter my existence. The second year of my Frankfort appointment, I was tempted to this unhappy place. The unexpected sight of faces which I had known in England, though they called up the most painful associations, strengthened me, nevertheless, in my resolution to be virtuous. My unexpected, my extraordinary fortune at the Redoute, the first night, made me forget all

my resolves, and has led to all this misery. I make my sad tale brief. I got involved at the New House: De Bœffleurs once more assisted me; though his terms were most severe. Yet, yet again, I was mad enough, vile enough, to risk what I did not possess. I lost to Prince Salvinski and a Russian gentleman, a considerable sum on the night before the *fête*. It is often the custom at the New House, as you know, among men who are acquainted, to pay and receive all losses which are considerable on the next night of meeting. The *fête* gave me breathing time: It was not necessary to redeem my pledge till the fourth night. I rushed to De Bœffleurs; he refused to assist me; alleging his own losses, and his previous advance. What was to be done? No possibility of making any arrangement with Salvinski. Had he won of me as others have done, an arrangement, though painful, would perhaps have been possible; but, by a singular fate, whenever I have chanced to be successful, it is of this man that I have won. De Bœffleurs then was the only chance. He was inexorable. I prayed to him;

I promised him every thing; I offered him any terms; I besought him on my knees;—in vain! in vain! At length, when he had worked me up to the point of last despair, he whispered *hope*. I listened,—let me be quick!—why finish—why finish; you know I fell!" The Baron again covered his face, and appeared perfectly overwhelmed.

"By God! it's too horrible," said St. George. "Grey, let's do something for him?"

"My dear St. George," said Vivian, "be calm—you are taken by surprise: I was prepared for all this. Believe me, it is better for you to leave us. If, on consideration, we think that anything,—any real benefit can be done to this unhappy gentleman, I am sure that we shall not be backward. But I cannot permit your generous feelings to be taken advantage of, by a gamester—a madman, who, if freed from his present difficulties this moment, will commit the same follies, and the same crimes to-morrow. I recommend you to retire, and meet me in the morning: breakfast with me at eight, we can then arrange everything."

Vivian's conduct had been so decisive, and evidently so well matured, that St. George felt, that in the present case, it was for him only to obey; and squeezing Vivian's hand very warmly, he retired, with wonder still expressed on his countenance; for he had not yet, in the slightest degree, recovered from the first surprise.

"Baron von Konigstein," said Vivian to the unhappy man, "we are alone. Mr. St. George has left the room: you are freed from the painful presence of the cousin of Captain Fane."

"You know all then!" exclaimed the Baron, quickly looking up; "or you have read my secret thoughts. How wonderful! at that very moment I was thinking of my friend. Would I had died with him! You know all then; and now—now you must believe me guilty. Yet, Mr. Grey, at this moment—at this moment of deepest affliction, of annihilating sorrow; when I can gain nothing by deceit; when, whatever may have been my loose expressions in a lighter hour, I am thinking of another world: I swear —and if I swear falsely, may I fall down a livid

corpse at your feet,—I swear that I was guiltless of the crime for which I suffered, guiltless as yourself. Dare I ask if you believe me?"

He awaited Vivian's answer, with the most eager anxiety; his mouth was open; his eyes half started from their sockets: had his life or reputation depended upon the answer, he could not have gasped with more convulsive agony.

"I do believe you."

"Then God be thanked! I owe you the greatest favour that I yet owe human being. What may be my fate—my end—I know not. Probably a few hours, and all will be over. Yet, before we part, Sir, it would be a relief; you would be doing a kind and Christian service to a dying man, to bear a message from me to one with whom you are acquainted—to one whom I cannot now name."

"Lady Madeleine Trevor, Sir?"

"Again you have read my thoughts! Lady Madeleine!—is it she who told you of my early history? Answer me, I beseech you?"

"I cannot answer. All that I know, is known to many."

"I must speak! if you have time, Mr. Grey, if you can listen for half an hour to a miserable being, it would be a consolation to me. I should die with ease, if I thought that Lady Madeleine could believe me innocent of that first great offence."

"Your Excellency may address anything to me, if it be your wish, even at this hour of the night. It may be better; after what has passed, we neither of us can sleep, and this business must be arranged at once."

"My object, Mr. Grey, is, that Lady Madeleine should receive from me at this moment, at a time when I can have no interest to deceive, an account of the particulars of her cousin's, and my friend's death. I sent it written after the horrid event, but she was ill; and Trevor, who was very bitter against me, returned the letters unopened. For four years, I have never travelled without these rejected letters; this year I have them not. But you could convey to Lady Madeleine my story as now given to you; to you at this horrid moment. For God's sake do, Sir, I beseech you!"

" Speak on, speak on!"

" I must say one word of my connexion with the family, to enable you fully to understand the horrid event, of which, if, as I believe, you only know what all know, you can form but a most imperfect conception. When I was Minister at the Court of London, I became acquainted—became, indeed, intimate with Mr. Trevor, then in office, the husband of Lady Madeleine. Her ladyship was just married. Trevor was an able and honourable man, but advanced in years; had he been younger he was not the man to have rivetted the affections of any woman. As it was, his marriage was a mere political match. I will not stop now to moralize on these unhappy connexions, in which the affections on neither side are consulted; but assuredly, in the present instance, Trevor had been more cautious in securing the boroughs of the Earl, than the heart of the Earl's daughter. I saw all this, Mr. Grey; I, still young, and with such blood flowing in my veins, that the youth of common men was actually old age in comparison with my sensa-

tions: I saw all this in the possession of all those accomplishments and qualities, which, according to the world, work such marvels with women. I saw all this, Mr. Grey: I, a libertine by principle. Of Lady Madeleine's beauty, of her soul, I need not speak. You have the happiness of being the friend of that matchless creature. Of myself, at that time, I may say, that though depraved, I was not heartless; and that there were moments when I panted to be excellent. Lady Madeleine and myself became friends; she found in me a companion, who not only respected her talents, and delighted in her conversation; but one who in return was capable of instructing, and was overjoyed to amuse her. I loved her; but when I loved her, Sir, I ceased to be a libertine. At first I thought that nothing in the world could have tempted me to have allowed her for an instant to imagine that I dared to look upon her in any other light than as a friend; but the negligence, the coldness of Trevor, the overpowering mastery of my own passions, drove me one day past the line, and I wrote that which I

dared not utter. But understand me, Sir; it was no common, no usual letter that I wrote. It never entered into my mind for an instant to insult such a woman with the common-place sophistry—the disguised sentiments of a ribald. No! no! I loved Lady Madeleine with all my spirit's strength. I would have sacrificed all my views in life—my ambition—my family—my fortune—my country, to have gained her; and I told her this in terms of the most respectful adoration. I worshipped the divinity, even while I attempted to profane the altar. Sir, when I had sent this letter, I was in despair. Conviction of the perfect insanity of my conduct flashed across my mind. I expected never to see her again. There came an answer; I opened it with the greatest agitation; to my surprise—an appointment. Why, why trouble you with a detail of my feelings at this moment—my mad hope—my dark despair. The moment for the interview arrived. I was received neither with affection, nor anger. In sorrow, in sorrow she spoke. I listened in despair. I was more madly in love with her than ever.

That very love made me give her such evidences of a contrite spirit, that I was pardoned. I rose with a resolution to be virtuous—with a determination to be her friend; then, then I made the fatal promise which you know of—to be doubly the friend of a man, whose friend I already was; it was then that I pledged myself to Lady Madeleine to be the guardian spirit of her cousin."—Here the Baron was so overpowered by his emotions that he leant back in his chair and ceased to speak. In a few minutes he resumed.

"Mr. Grey, I did my duty; by all that's sacred I did my duty! night, and day, I was with young Fane. A thousand times he was on the brink of ruin—a thousand times I saved him. One day—one never to be forgotten day, —one most dark and damnable day, I called on him, and found him on the point of joining a coterie of the most desperate character. I remonstrated with him;—I entreated;—I supplicated him not to go—in vain. At last he agreed to forego his engagement, on condition that I dined with him. There were reasons that

day of importance for my not staying with him; yet every consideration vanished, when I thought of her for whom I was exerting myself. I stayed with him. Fane was frantic this day; and, imagining, of course, that there was no chance of his leaving his home, I did not refuse to drink freely—to drink deeply! My doing so was the only chance of keeping him at home. On a sudden he started up, and would quit the house. My utmost exertions could not prevent him. At last I prevailed upon him to call upon the Trevors, as I thought that there, at least, he would be safe. He agreed. As we were passing down Pall Mall, we met two foreigners of distinction, and a Noble of your country; they were men of whom we both knew little. I had myself introduced Fane to the foreigners a few days before, being aware that they were men of high rank. After some conversation, they asked us to join them at supper, at the house of their English friend. I declined; but nothing could induce Fane to refuse them; and I finally accompanied him. Play was introduced after supper; I made an ineffectual

struggle to get Fane home; but I was too full of wine to be energetic. After losing a small sum, I got up from the table, and staggering to a sofa, fell fast asleep. Even as I passed Fane's chair in this condition, my master-thought was evident, and I pulled him by the shoulder; all was useless,—I woke to madness!"—It was terrible to witness the anguish of Von Konigstein.

"Could you not clear yourself?" asked Vivian, for he felt it necessary to speak.

"Clear myself! Every thing told against me. The villains were my friends, not the sufferer's; I was not injured; my dining with him was part of the conspiracy; he was intoxicated previous to his ruin. Conscious of my innocence, quite desperate, but confiding in my character, I accused the guilty trio, publicly accused them; they recriminated, and answered; and without clearing themselves, convinced the public that I was their dissatisfied and disappointed tool. I can speak no more." Here the head of the unhappy man sunk down upon his breast. His sad tale was told; the

excitement was over; he now only felt his despair.

It is awful to witness sudden death; but, oh! how much more awful it is to witness in a moment the moral fall of a fellow-creature! How tremendous is the quick succession of mastering passions! The firm, the terrifically firm, the madly resolute denial of guilt; that eagerness of protestation, which is a sure sign of crime;—then the agonizing suspense before the threatened proof is produced—the hell of detection!—the audible anguish of sorrow—the curses of remorse—the silence of despair! Few of us, unfortunately, have passed through life without having beheld some instance of this instantaneous degradation of human nature. But oh! how terrible is it when the confessed criminal has been but a moment before our friend. What a contrast to the laugh of joyous companionship is the quivering tear of an agonized frame! how terrible to be prayed to by those, whose wishes a moment before we lived only to anticipate!

And bitter as might have been the feelings,

and racked as might have been the heart of Von Konigstein, he could not have felt more at this moment—more exquisite anguish—deeper remorse—than did Vivian Grey.—Openly to have disgraced this man! How he had been deceived! His first crime—the first crime of such a being; of one who had suffered so much—so unjustly! Could he but have guessed the truth, he would have accused the Baron in private—have awakened him to the enormity of his contemplated crime—have saved him from its perpetration—have saved him from the perpetration of any other. But he had imagined him to be a systematic, a heartless villain—and he looked forward to this night to avenge the memory of————the brother of her that he loved.

"Von Konigstein," said Vivian, after a long silence; "I feel for you. Had I known this, believe me, that I would have spared both you and myself this night of misery. I would have prevented you from looking back to this day with remorse. I am not one who delight in witnessing the misery or degradation of my

species. Do not despair;—you have suffered for that of which you were not guilty; you must not suffer now for what has passed. Much, much would I give to see you freed from that wretched knave, whose vile career I was very nearly tempted this evening to have terminated for ever. To Lady Madeleine I shall make the communication you desire, and I will answer for her Ladyship that your communication will be credited. Let this give you hope. As to the transactions of this evening, the knowledge of them can never transpire to the world. It is the interest of De Bœffleurs to be silent: if he speak, no one will credit the tale of such a creature, who, if he speak truth, must proclaim his own infamy. For the perfect silence of the Trevor party, I pledge myself. They have done you too much injustice not to hail with pleasure the opportunity of making you some atonement. And now for the immediate calls upon your honour;—in what sum are you indebted to Prince Salvinski, and his friend?"

"Thousands!—two—three thousand!"

"I shall then have an opportunity of ridding

myself of that, the acquisition of which, to me, has been matter of the greatest sorrow. Baron Von Konigstein, your honour is saved;—I pledge myself to discharge the claims of Salvinski, and his friend."

"Impossible! I cannot allow—"

"Stop, sir!—in this business I must command. I wished not to recur to what has passed—you make me. Surely there can be no feelings of delicacy between us two now. If I gave you the treasures of the Indies you would not be under so great an obligation to me as you are already:—I say this with pain. I recommend you to leave Ems to-morrow. Public business will easily account for your sudden departure. Let us not meet again. And now, Von Konigstein, your character is yet safe;—you are yet in the prime of life;—you have vindicated yourself from that which has preyed upon your mind for years. Cease to accuse your fate; find the causes of your past misery in your own unbridled passions. Restrain them, and be happy!" Vivian was

about to leave the room, when the Baron started from his seat, and seized his hand; he would have spoken, but the words died upon his lips; and before he could recover himself, Vivian had retired.

CHAPTER XIV.

The sudden departure of Baron Von Konigstein from the Baths excited great surprise, and sorrow. All wondered at the cause, and all regretted the effect. The Archduke missed his good stories:—the Rouge-et-noir table, his constant presence; and Monsieur le Restaurateur gave up, in consequence, an embryo idea of a fête and fire-works for his own benefit; which agreeable plan he had trusted with his Excellency's generous co-operation as steward, or patron, he should have had no difficulty in carrying into execution. But no one was more surprised, and more regretted the absence of his Excellency, than his friend Mr. Fitzloom. What could be the reason?—Public business

of course. Indeed he had learnt as much, confidentially, from Cracowsky. He tried Mr. Grey, but could elicit nothing satisfactorily; he pumped Mr. St. George, but produced only the waters of oblivion: Mr. St. George was gifted, when it suited his purpose, with a most convenient want of memory. There must be something in the wind—perhaps a war. Was the independence of Greece about to be acknowledged, or the dependence of Spain about to be terminated? What first-rate power had marched a million of soldiers into the land of a weak neighbour, on the mere pretence of exercising the military? What patriots had had the proud satisfaction of establishing a constitutional government without bloodshed—to be set aside in the course of the next month in the same manner? Had a conspiracy for establishing a republic in Russia been frustrated by the timely information of the intended first Consuls! Were the Janissaries learning mathematics?—or had Lord Cochrane taken Constantinople in the James Watt steam-packet? One of these many events must have

happened—but which? At length Fitzloom decided on a general war. England must interfere either to defeat the ambition of France—or to curb the rapacity of Russia—or to check the arrogance of Austria—or to regenerate Spain—or to redeem Greece—or to protect Portugal—or to shield the Brazils—or to uphold the Bible Societies—or to consolidate the Greek Church—or to monopolize the commerce of Mexico—or to disseminate the principles of free trade—or to keep up her high character—or to keep up the price of corn.—England must interfere. In spite of his conviction, however, Fitzloom did not alter the arrangements of his tour—he still intended to travel for two years. All he did, was to send immediate orders to his broker in England to sell two millions of consols. The sale was of course effected—the example followed—stocks fell ten per cent.—the exchange turned—money became scarce. The public funds of all Europe experienced a great decline—smash went the country banks—consequent runs on the London—a dozen Baronets failed in one morning—Portland-place

deserted—the cause of infant Liberty at a terrific discount—the Greek loan disappeared like a vapour in a storm—all the new American States refused to pay their dividends—manufactories deserted—the revenue in a decline—the country in despair—orders in council—meetings of parliament—change of ministry—and new loan! Such were the terrific consequences of a diplomatist turning black-leg! This secret history of the late distress is a lesson to all modern statesmen. Rest assured, that in politics, however tremendous the effects, the causes are often as trifling, and sometimes still more despicable.

Vivian found his reception by the Trevor party, the morning after the memorable night, a sufficient reward for all his anxiety and exertion. St. George, a generous, open-hearted young man, full of gratitude to Vivian, and regretting his previous want of cordiality towards him, now delighted in doing full justice to his coolness, courage, and ability. Lady Madeleine said a great deal in the most graceful and impressive manner; but Violet

Fane scarcely spoke. Vivian, however, read in her eyes her approbation and her gratitude. Mr. Sherborne received our hero with a set speech, in the middle of which he broke down; for the old gentleman's stout heart was full: and, shaking Vivian warmly by the hand, he gave him, in a manner which affected all present, his blessing—"I knew I was right in my opinion of you; I saw directly you were not a mere young man of the present day—you all see I was right in my opinion; if I hadn't been, I should have owned it—I should have had the candour to acknowledge I was wrong—never ashamed to confess I'm mistaken."

"And now, how came you to discover the whole plot, Mr. Grey?" asked Lady Madeleine "for we have not yet heard. Was it at the table?"

"They would hardly have had recourse to such clumsy instruments, as would have given us the chance of detecting the conspiracy by casual observation. No, no, we owe our preservation and our gratitude to one, whom we must here-

after count among our friends. I was prepared, as I told you, for every thing; and though I had seen similar cards to those with which they played only a few hours before, it was with difficulty that I satisfied myself at the table, that the cards we lost by were prepared; so wonderful is the contrivance!"

"But who is the unknown friend?" said Violet Fane, with great eagerness.

"I must have the pleasure of keeping you all in suspense," said Vivian: "cannot any of you guess?"

"None—none—none!"

"What say you then to——Essper George?"

"Impossible!"

"It is the fact, that he, and he alone, is our preserver. Soon after my arrival at this place, this singular being was seized with the unaccountable fancy of becoming my servant. You all remember his unexpected appearance one day in the saloon. In the evening of the same day, I found him sleeping at the door of my room; and thinking it high time that he should be taught more discretion,

I spoke to him very seriously the next morning respecting his troublesome and eccentric conduct. It was then that I learnt his wish. I objected, of course, to engaging a servant of whose previous character I was ignorant, and of which I could not be informed; and one whose peculiar habits would render both himself and his master notorious. While I declined his services, I also advised him most warmly to give up all idea of deserting his present mode of life, for which I thought him extremely well suited. The consequence of my lecture, was what you all perceived with surprise, a great change in Essper's character. He became serious, reserved, and retiring; and commenced his career as a respectable character, by throwing off his quaint costume. In a short time, by dint of making a few bad bargains, he ingratiated himself with Ernstorff, Von Konigstein's pompous Chasseur. His object in forming this connection, was to gain an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the duties of a gentleman's servant, and in this he has succeeded. About a week since, he purchased from Ernstorff

a large quantity of cast-off apparel of the Baron's, and other perquisites of a great man's valet; among these were some playing cards which had been borrowed one evening in great haste from the servant of that rascal De Bœffleurs, and never returned. On accidentally examining these cards, Essper, to his horror and surprise, detected they were marked. The system on which the marks are formed and understood, is so simple and novel, that it was long before I could bring myself to believe that his suspicions were founded even on a probability. At length, however, he convinced me. It is at Vienna, he tells me, that he has met with these cards before; or with some marked, if not on the same, certainly on a similar principle. The marks are all on the rim of the cards; and an experienced dealer, that is to say a black-leg, can with these marks produce any results, and combinations, which may suit his purpose. Essper tells me that De Bœffleurs is even more skilled in sleight of hand than himself. From Ernstorff, Essper learnt on the day of the Fête that Mr. St. George was to dine with the Che-

valier at the Baron's apartments on the morrow, and that there was a chance that I should join them. He suspected that villainy was in the wind, and when I retired to my room at a late hour on the night of the fête, I there met him, and it was then that he revealed to me every thing which I have told you. Am I not right then, in calling him our preserver?"

"What can be done for him?" said Lady Madeleine.

"His only wish is already granted; he is my servant. That he will serve me diligently, and faithfully, I have no doubt. I only wish that he would accept, or could appreciate a more worthy reward."

"Can man be more amply rewarded," said Miss Fane, "than by choosing his own remuneration? I think he has shown in his request, his accustomed talent. I must go and see him this moment."

"Say nothing of what has passed, he is prepared for silence from all parties."

A week, a happy week passed over, and few minutes of the day found Vivian absent from the

side of Violet Fane; and now he thought again of England, of his return to that country under very different circumstances to what he had ever contemplated. Soon, very soon, he trusted to write to his father, to announce to him the revolution in his wishes, the consummation of his hopes. Soon, very soon, he trusted that he should hail his native cliffs, a reclaimed wanderer, with a matured mind, and a contented spirit; his sorrows forgotten, his misanthropy laid aside.

CHAPTER XV.

It was about a week after the departure of the Baron, that two young Englishmen, who had been College friends of Mr. St. George, arrived at the Baths. These were Mr. Anthony St. Leger, and Mr. Adolphus St. John. In the academic shades of Christchurch, these three gentlemen had, when youths, succeeded to the admiring envy of all under graduates, and to the heavy cost both of their purses and their constitutions, in a faint imitation of the second-rate debauchery of a metropolis. At Oxford, that venerable nurse of wit and humour,—where fun, like their sermons, though orthodox is rather dull,—a really facetious fellow of New College, had dubbed these infant liber-

tines "All Saints." Among their youthful companions they bore the more martial style of "The Three Champions," St. George, St. John, and St. Anthony.

St. John and St. Anthony had just completed the grand tour; and after passing the Easter at Rome, had returned through the Tyrol from Italy. Since then, they had travelled over most parts of Germany; and now, in the beginning of July, found themselves at the Baths of Ems. Two years travel had not produced any very beneficial effect on either of these sainted personages. They left the University with empty heads, and vitiated minds. A season in London introduced them to the life of which they had previously only read and heard in the accounts of lying novels, and the boastings of worn-out roués; and they felt disgust at their college career, only because they could now compare their former crude dissipation, with the resources of the most miraculous of modern cities. Travelling, as they had done, with minds utterly incapable either of observation or reflection, they had gained by

visiting the capitals of all Europe, only a due acquaintance with the vices of each; and the only difference that could be observed in their conduct on their return, was, that their affectation was rather more disgusting, because it was more obtrusive. What capital companions for old Sherborne!

"Corpo di Bacco! my champion, who ever thought of meeting thee, thou holy saint! By the eye-brow of Venus, my spirit rejoiceth!" exclaimed St. Anthony, whose peculiar affectation was an adoption in English of the Italian oaths.

"This is the sweetest spot, St. Anthony, that we have found since we left Paradiso; that is, St. George, in the vulgar tongue, since we quitted Italia. 'Italia! oh, Italia!'—I forget the rest, probably you remember it. Certainly a most sweet spot this, quite a Gaspar!"

Art was the peculiar affectation of St. John; he was, indeed, quite a patron of the *belle Arti*"—had scattered his orders through the studios of most of the celebrated sculptors of Italy, and spoke on all subjects and all things,

only with a view to their capability of forming *matériel* for the painter. According to the school of which Mr. St. John was an humble disciple, the only use of the human passions is, that they produce *situations* for the historical painter; and Nature, according to these votaries of the τό καλον, is only to be valued as affording hints for the more perfect conceptions of a Claude or a Salvator."

"By the girdle of Venus, a devilish fine woman!" exclaimed St. Anthony.

"A splendid bit!" ejaculated St. John; "touched in with freedom—a grand *tournure*—great *goût* in the swell of the neck. What a study for Retsch!"

"In the name of the Graces, who is it, mio Santo?"

"Ay! name, name *la bellissima Signora.*"

"The 'fine bit,' St. John, is my sister."

"The devil!"

"*Diavolo!*"

"Will you introduce us, most holy man?"

This request from both, simultaneously arranging their mustachios.

The two Saints were accordingly, in due time, introduced; but finding the attention of Violet Fane always engrossed, and receiving some not very encouraging responses from Lady Madeleine, they voted her ladyship cursedly satirical; and passing a general censure on the annoying coldness of English women, they were in four-and-twenty hours attached to the suite of the Miss Fitzlooms, to whom they were introduced by St. George as his most particular friends, and were received with the most flattering consideration.

"By the aspect of Diana! fine girls, and some blood in them!" swore St. Anthony.

"Truly most gorgeous colouring! quite Venetian! Aurelia is a perfect Giorgione!" said St. John.

"Madeleine," said St. George, one morning to his sister; "have you any objection to make up a party with the Fitzlooms to pass a day at Nassau? You know we have often talked of it; and as Violet is so well now, and the weather so delightful, there surely can be no objection. The Fitzlooms are very agree-

able people; and though you don't admire the Santi, still, upon my word, when you know them a little more, you'll find them very pleasant fellows; and they're extremely good-natured; and just the fellows for such a party; and I'll take care that they don't slang Mr. Sherborne, whom, by the bye, Mr. St. John very much admires. He says he'd make a grand head for Ludovico Caracci —something very Bolognese in the grey tints of his forehead. Do not give me a refusal! I've set my mind upon your joining the party. Pray nod assent—thank you—thank you. Now I must go and arrange every thing. Let's see—there are seven Fitzlooms; for we can't count on less than two horrid boys; yourself, Mr. Sherborne, Grey, Violet, and myself, five —the Santi—quite enough—quite enough—a most delightful party. Half a dozen servants, and as many donkeys, will manage the provisions. Then three light carriages will take us all. 'By the wand of Mercury!' as St. Anthony would vow, most admirably planned!"

"By the breath of Zephyr! a most lovely day, Miss Fane," said St. Anthony, on the morning of the intended excursion.

"Quite a Claude!" said St. John.

"Almost as beautiful as an Italian winter's day, Mr. St. Leger?" asked Miss Fane.

"Hardly, hardly!" said St. Anthony, with a serious air; for he imagined the question to be quite genuine.

"Lady Madeleine, I cannot take my eyes off that venerable countenance!" said St. John, speaking of Mr. Sherborne. "There are some flesh-tints on the higher cheek, which almost make me fancy myself in the Gallery at Bologna. He doesn't rouge now, does he? You may speak perfectly in confidence. I assure your ladyship that nothing shall transpire; only I 'm very curious to know; such tints I never saw before!"

"Really, Mr. St. John," said her ladyship, smiling; "I regret very much that I am not initiated in the mysteries of Mr. Sherborne's toilet; but my uncle is a very candid man, and I have no doubt he will confess in a minute

if he 's guilty of making up; suppose you ask him."

" Why, no; at his age, people of his country have odd prejudices. He may not make up; and he might feel a little offended. To say the truth, I think it is *au naturel.* There is a grey tint under the eye, which I don't think that any modern colours could have produced—perfectly Ludovico, perfectly. If he do make up, I should like very much to know where he gets his colour: that 's a secret, Lady Madeleine, which seems to be lost for ever. I was talking the other day to Benvenuti, the great Florentine painter, about that very point:—' Benvenuti,' said I—a very gentlemanly man is Benvenuti. It has often struck me, I don't know whether it has your ladyship—probably it may have; that all men of genius are very gentlemanly. For instance, take all the artists of ancient and modern times. We know very little of Apelles; yet we do know that he was the intimate friend of Alexander the Great: and all painters who are intimate friends of crowned heads, and who are in the

habit of going to court, are, I have remarked, very gentlemanly. Now, for instance, can you possibly meet with a more gentlemanly man than Sir Thomas Lawrence? and Benvenuti, too, as I said before, Benvenuti is a very gentlemanly man. I was saying to him one day, as I mentioned—'*Cavaliero !*'—for I need not tell your ladyship that the great artist has the honour of being a Knight of——"

"Thrice holy man!" halloed out St. Anthony to St. John;—"thrice holy man! the champion wishes to know whether you have arranged about the malvoisie. Miss Fane has decided for the malvoisie. By the body of Bacchus, a right good liquor!"

"Lady Madeleine, will you excuse the anecdote of Benvenuti at present?—the truth is, I am butler, and your charming conversation is making me, I fear, neglect my duties." So saying, ran off the Saint.

The carriages are at the door; into the first ascended Mrs. Fitzloom, two daughters and the travelling Saints. The second bore Lady Madeleine, Mr. Fitzloom, and his two sons;

the third division was commanded by Mr. Sherborne, and was formed of St. George and Aurelia Fitzloom, Miss Fane, and Vivian.

Away, away rolled the carriages, the day was beautiful, the sky was without a cloud, and a mild breeze prevented the heat of the sun from being overpowering. All were in high spirits; for St. George had made a capital master of the ceremonies, and had arranged the company in the carriages to their mutual satisfaction. St. Anthony swore, by the soul of Psyche! that Augusta Fitzloom was an angel; and St. John was in equal raptures with Araminta, who had an expression about the eyes, which reminded him of Titian's Flora. Mrs. Fitzloom's natural silence did not disturb the uninterrupted jargon of the Santi, whose affectation, slang, and foppery, elicited loud and continued approbation from the fair sisters. The mother sat admiring these sprigs of noble trees. The young Fitzlooms, in crimson cravats, conversed with Lady Madeleine with a delightful military air; and their happy parent, as he gazed upon them with satisfied affection,

internally promised them both a commission in a crack regiment. Each of the boys already imagined that Lady Madeleine was in love with him; and her ladyship being convinced that all were happy, did not regret the absence of those she really did love, but was amused; even Mr. Sherborne was contented, and did not complain. Had he been put in the same carriage with those fools, he really did not think that he should have been able to get on. It showed St. George's sense, making a different arrangement; and he must say, that though they did sometimes disagree, he had no right to complain of the general behaviour of St. George towards him. This was said with a bow to Miss Aurelia Fitzloom;—need I say that Violet and Vivian were satisfied with the arrangement?

The road from Ems to Nassau winds along the banks of the Lahn, through two leagues of most delightful scenery; at the end of which, springing up from the peak of a bold and richly wooded mountain, the lofty tower of the ancient castle of Nassau meets your view. Winding walks round the sides of the mountain, lead

through all the varieties of sylvan scenery, and command in all points the most magnificent views of the surrounding country. These finally bring you to the old castle, whose spacious chambers, though now choked up with masses of grey ruin, or covered with underwood, still bear witness to the might of their former lord; the powerful Baron whose sword gained for his posterity a throne. Here it was, by the massy keep, 'all tenantless, save to the cranny-ing wind,' that Mr. Sherborne delivered to a youthful auditory, who, seated on the fragments of the ancient walls, rested after the toils of the ascent, the following lecture on Gothic architecture.

On second thoughts, I shall keep it for Mr. Colburn's magazine. The Misses Fitzloom, with that vivid genius for which young unmarried ladies are celebrated, entered with the most delightful enthusiasm into all the interest of Mr. Sherborne's discourse. In a few minutes they perfectly understood all the agitated questions which had puzzled the architects of all ages, and each had her separate solution of

mysteries, which never can be solved. How delightful is this elegant and enraptured ignorance! How decisive is the opinion of a young lady who has studied architecture in the elevations of the Regent's Park, on the controversy of the round arch, and the pointed style! How exquisite their animated tattle about mullions, spandrils, and trefoils!

But Mr. Sherborne was delighted with his pupils, and all seemed happy; none happier than Violet Fane. Never did she look so beautiful as to-day—never were her spirits so animated—never had she boasted that her pulse beat more melodious music, nor her lively blood danced a more healthful measure. After examining all the antique chambers of the castle, and discovering, as they flattered themselves, secret passages, and dark dungeons, and hidden doors, they left this interesting relict of the middle ages; and soon, by a gradual descent through the most delightful shrubberies, they again found themselves at the bottom of the valley. Here they visited the modern Château of Baron von Stein, one of the most enlightened

and able politicians that Germany has ever produced. As Minister of Prussia, he commenced those reforms which the illustrious Hardenberg perfected. For upwards of five centuries the family of Stein have retained their territorial possessions in the valley of the Lahn. Their family castle, at present a ruin, and formerly a fief of the house of Nassau, is now only a picturesque object in the pleasure-grounds of the present lord.

The noon had passed some hours, before the delighted wanderers complained of fatigue, and by that time they found themselves in a pleasant green glade on the skirts of the forest of Nassau. It was nearly environed by mountains, covered with hanging woods, which shaded the beautiful valley, and gave it the appearance of a sylvan amphitheatre. From a rocky cleft in these green mountains, a torrent, dashing down with impetuous force, and whose fall was almost concealed by the cloud of spray which it excited, gave birth to a small and gentle river; whose banks were fringed with the most beautiful trees, which prevented the

sun's darts from piercing its coldness, by bowing their fair heads over its waters. From their extending branches, Nature's choristers sent forth many a lovely lay

"Of God's high praise, and of their loves' sweet teen."

Near the banks of this river, the servants, under the active direction of Essper George, had prepared some refreshments for the party. The cloth had been laid with great neatness on a raised work of wood and turf; and rustic seats of the same material surrounded the rude table. All kinds of cold meats, and all kinds of pasties, venison, pheasants, plovers, rabbits, pickled fish, prawns, and craw fish, greeted the ravished eyes of the wearied band of foresters. July is not a month for eating; but, nevertheless, in Germany we are somewhat consoled for the want of the curious varieties of cookery, by the exhilarating presence of white young partridges, delicious ducklings, and most tender leverets. Then there were all sorts of forced meats, and stuffed birds. You commenced with a pompous display of unnecessary science, to

extract for a famished fair one the wing and merrythought of a fairer chicken—when lo, and behold! the facile knife sunk without an effort into the plump breast, and the unresisting bird discharged a cargo of rich stuffed balls, of the most fascinating flavour. Then July, above all, is the season for fruits; and though few of the Rhenish grapes were yet ripe, still money had procured some plates of the red and rich Asmanhausens; and the refreshing strawberry, the luscious peach, the grateful apricot, the thrilling nectarine, and above all, the peerless pine-apple were not wanting. Shall I forget the piquant currant, and the mellow gooseberry? Pomona forbid! Humble fruits I love you, and once loved you more!

"Well!" said Violet Fane, "I never will be a member of an adventurous party like the present, of which St. George is not manager: this is admirable!"

"I must not take the whole credit upon myself, Violet; St. John is butler, and St. Leger my vice-chamberlain."

"Well, I can't praise Mr. St. John, till I 've

tasted the malvoisie which he has promised; but as for the other part of the entertainment Mr. St. Leger, I 'm sure, this is a temptation which it would be a sin even in St. Anthony to withstand."

"By the body of Bacchus, very good!" swore Mr. St. Leger.

"These mountains," said Mr. St. John, "remind me of one of Nicolo Poussin's cool valleys. The party, indeed, give it a different character —quite a Watteau!"

"Now, Mrs. Fitzloom," said St. George, who was quite in his element; "let me recommend a little of this pike? Lady Madeleine, I 've sent you some lamb. Miss Fitzloom, I hope St. Anthony is taking care of you. Wrightson! plates to Mr. St. Leger. Holy man, and much beloved! send that beef to Mr. Sherborne. Araminta, some poulet? Grey has helped you, Violet? Aurelia, my dear, some partridge? William Pitt Fitzloom, I leave you to yourself. George Canning Fitzloom, take care of the ladies near you. Essper George!— where 's Essper George? St. John, who is

your deputy in the wine department?—Wrightson! bring those long green bottles out of the river, and put the champaigne underneath the willow. Will your ladyship take some light claret? Mrs. Fitzloom, you must use your tumbler; nothing but tumblers allowed, by Miss Fane's particular request!"

"St. George! thou holy man!" said Miss Fane; "methinks you are very impertinent. You shall not be my patron saint, if you go on so."

For the next hour there was nothing heard save the calling of servants; the rattling of knives and forks; the drawing of corks; and continued bursts of laughter, which were not occasioned by any brilliant observations, either of the Saints, or any other persons; but merely the result of an exuberance of spirits on the part of every one present. At last the voice of St. Anthony was heard.

"Mr. Sherborne, will you wine?"

"Sir! I don't understand you," answered the old gentleman. A cloud was on his brow

"Oh! save my uncle from exploding, Mr.

Grey! for heaven's sake, put out his passion. If he do not take some liquid immediately, I 'm sure he must go off in a rage. Holy St. Anthony has been talking 'slang.' Uncle! Mr. Sherborne! Mr. St. Leger wishes to know whether he may have the honour of taking wine with you. You don 't seem to understand him."

"No; nor any body else."

"Old Chrononhotonthologos seems as crusty as a bottle of his own undrinkable port," whispered St. Anthony to Miss Fitzloom, who was delighted with this brilliant sally. "I wonder what 's the use of these boring old uncles!" Miss Fitzloom laughed still more at a remark which was still more brilliant.

"A magnificent study, that old uncle of St. George's!" whispered St. John to Araminta. "I wish I could get him to sit. I dare say there 's some poor devil of an artist at the Baths, who 'd touch him in very prettily with black chalk. I must ask the old man. Let me give you a little more pheasant."

"Well, Aurelia!" said Lady Madeleine, "do you prefer our present mode of life to feasting

in an old hall, covered with banners and battered shields, and surrounded by mysterious corridors and dark dungeons." Aurelia was so flattered by the notice of Lady Madeleine, that she made her no answer; probably because she was intent on a plover's egg.

"I think we might all retire to this valley," said Miss Fane, "and revive the old feudal times with great success. St. George might take us to Nassau Castle, and you, Mr. Fitzloom, might refortify the old tower of Stein. With two sons, however, who are about to enter the Guards, I'm afraid we must be your vassals. Then what should we do? We couldn't have wood parties every day; I suppose we should get tired of each other. No! that does seem impossible; don't you all think so?"

Omnes, "Impossible, impossible!"

"We must, however, have some regular pursuit, some cause of constant excitement, some perpetual source of new emotions. New ideas of course, we must give up; there would be no going to London for the season, for new

opinions to astound country cousins on our return. Some pursuit must be invented; we all must have something to do. I have it, I have it! St. George shall be a tyrant!"

"I'm very much obliged to you, Violet."

"Yes! a bloody, unprincipled, vindictive, remorseless tyrant, with a long black beard; I can't tell how long! about twenty thousand times longer than Mr. St. Leger's mustachios."

"By the beard of Jove!" swore St. Anthony, as he started from his seat, and arranged with his thumb and forefinger the delicate Albanian tuft of his upper lip; "By the beard of Jove, Miss Fane, I'm obliged to you!"

"Well then," continued Violet, "St. George being a tyrant, Lady Madeleine must be an unhappy, illused, persecuted woman!"

"Now, Violet, my dear! do be calm, do restrain yourself!"

"An unhappy, illused, persecuted woman, living on black bread and green water, in an unknown dungeon. My part shall be to discover her imprisonment. Sounds of strange music attract my attention to a part of the

the castle which I have not before frequented. There I shall distinctly hear a female voice chaunting the 'Bridesmaids' Chorus,' with Erard's double pedal accompaniment. By the aid of the Confessors of the two families—two drinking, rattling, impertinent, most corrupt, and most amusing friars: to wit—our sainted friends—"

Here both Mr. St. Leger, and Mr. St. John bowed low to Miss Fane.

"A most lively personage is Miss Fane," whispered St. Anthony to his neighbour Miss Fitzloom,—"great style!"

"Most amusing, delightful girl—great style—rather a display to-day, I think."

"Oh, decidedly! and devilish personal too—devilish; some people wouldn't like it. I 've no doubt she 'll say something about you next."

"Oh! I shall be very surprised, indeed, if she does, very surprised indeed! It may be very well to you, but Miss Fane must be aware——"

Before this pompous sentence could be finished, an incident occurred which prevented Miss Fane from proceeding with her allotment of

characters, and rendered unnecessary the threatened indignation of Miss Fitzloom.

Miss Fane, as we mentioned, suddenly ceased speaking; the eyes of all were turned in the direction in which she was gazing—gazing as if she had seen a ghost.

"What are you looking up at, Violet?" asked St. George.

"Didn't you see any thing? didn't any of you see any thing?"

"None—none—none!"

"Mr. Grey, surely you must have seen it!"

"No; I saw nothing."

"It could not be fancy—impossible! I saw it distinctly. I cannot be in a dream. See there! there again, on that topmost branch. See! see! it moves!"

Some odd shrill sounds, uttered in the voice of a Pulcinello, attracted the notice of them all, and lo! high in the air, behind a lofty chesnut tree, the figure of a Pulcinello did appear, hopping and vaulting in the unsubstantial air. Now it sent forth another shrill piercing sound, and now, with both its hands, it patted and

complacently stroked its ample paunch; dancing all the time, with unremitting activity, and wagging its queer head at the astounded guests.

"Who, what can it be?" cried all. The Misses Fitzloom shrieked, and the Santi seemed quite puzzled.

"Who, what can it be?"

Ere time could be given for any one to hazard a conjecture, the figure had advanced from behind the trees, and had spanned in an instant the festal board, with two enormous stilts, on which they now perceived it was mounted. The Misses Fitzloom shrieked again. The figure imitated their cries in his queer voice, and gradually raising one enormous stilt up into the air, stood only on one support, which was planted behind the lovely Araminta.

"Oh! inimitable Essper George!" exclaimed Violet Fane.

Here Signor Punch commenced a *chanson*, which he executed in the tone peculiar to his character, and in a style which drew applauses from all; and then, with a hop, step, and a

jump, he was again behind the chesnut tree. In a moment he advanced without his stilts, towards the table. Here, on the turf, he again commenced his antics; kicking his nose with his right foot, and his hump with his left one; executing the most splendid somersets, and cutting all species of capers; and never ceasing for a moment from performing all his movements to the inspiring music of his own melodious voice. At last, jumping up immensely high in the air, he fell as if all his joints were loosened, and the Misses Fitzloom, imagining that his bones were really broken, shrieked again. But now Essper began the wonderful performance of a dead body possessed by a devil; and in a minute his shattered corpse, apparently without the assistance of any of its members, began to jump, and move about the ground with the most miraculous rapidity. At length it disappeared behind the chesnut tree.

"Grey!" said St. George; "we owe all this timely entertainment to you. I really think it is the most agreeable day I ever passed in all my life."

"Oh, decidedly!" said St. Anthony. "St. John, you remember our party to Pæstum with Lady Calabria Mc Crater, and the Marquess of Agrigentum. It was nothing to this! Nothing! nothing! Do you know I thought that rather dull."

"Yes, dull, dull; too elaborate; too highly finished; nothing of the *pittore improvisatore*. A party of this kind should be more sketchy in its style; the outline more free, and less detail."

"This is all very well for you, young folks," said Mr. Sherborne, "and Essper is certainly a clever knave; but my dear young friends, if you had had the good fortune of living fifty years ago, when the first Scaramouch that I remember appeared in London, then you might have laughed. As it is, this is all very well of Essper; but—" Here Mr. Sherborne jumped on his chair, and suddenly stopped. A great green monkey was seated opposite to him, imitating with ludicrous fidelity his energetic action. The laugh was universal. The monkey, with one bound,

jumped over Mr. Sherborne's head and disappeared.

"Essper is coming out to-day," said Vivian, to Miss Fane, "after a long, and I venture to say, painful forbearance. However, I hope you 'll excuse him. It seems to amuse us."

"Amuse us! I think it's delightful. See! here he comes again."

He now appeared in his original costume; the one in which Vivian first met him at the fair. Bowing very respectfully to the company, he threw his hand carelessly over his mandolin, and having tried the melody of its strings, sang with great taste, and a sweet voice—sweeter, from its contrast with its previous shrill tones, —a very pretty romance. All applauded him very warmly, and no one more so than Violet Fane.

"Ah! inimitable Essper George, how can we sufficiently thank you! How admirably he plays! and his voice is quite beautiful. Oh! couldn't we dance? wouldn't it be delightful; and he could play on his guitar. Think of the delicious turf!"

Omnes—" Delightful! delightful! delightful!" they rose from table.

" Violet, my dear, asked Lady Madeleine, " what are you going to do?"

" By the toe of Terpsichore! as Mr. St. Leger would say, I am going to dance."

" But remember, dearest, to-day you have done so much!—let us be wise—let us be moderate; though you feel so much better, still think what a change to-day has been from your usual habits!"

" But, dearest Lady Madeleine, think of dancing on the turf, and I feel so well—so——"

" Oh! let the dear creature dance if she likes," said Mr. Sherborne: " my opinion is, that dancing never does a young woman any harm. Who you'll get to dance with you though," turning to the Misses Fitzloom, " I can't tell; as to what the young men of the present day call dancing.——"

" By the Graces! I am for the waltz," said St. Anthony.

" It has certainly a very free touch to recommend it," said St. John.

"No, no," said Violet; "let us all join in a country dance. Mr. Sherborne, shall I introduce you to a partner?"

"Ah! you little angel," said the delighted old man; "you look just like your dear mother, that you do!"

"We staid old personages do not dance," said Lady Madeleine; "and therefore I recommend you a quadrille."

The quadrille was soon formed: Violet made up for not dancing with Vivian, at the Archduke's. She was in the most animated spirits, and kept up a successful rivalry with Mr. St. Leger, who evidently prided himself, as Mr. Fitzloom observed, "on his light fantastic toe." Now he pirouetted like Paul, and now he attitudinized like Albert; and now Violet Fane eclipsed all his exertions by her inimitable imitations of Ronzi Vestris's rushing and arrowy manner. St. Anthony, in despair, but quite delighted, revealed a secret which had been taught him by a Spanish dancer at Milan; but then Violet Fane vanquished him for ever, with the *pas de Zephyr* of the exquisite Fanny Bias.

The day was fast declining when the carriages arrived; the young people were in no humour to return; and as, when they had once entered the carriage, the day seemed finished for ever, they proposed walking part of the way home. Lady Madeleine made little objection to Violet joining the party, as she feared after the exertion that Miss Fane had been making, a drive in an open carriage would be dangerous; and yet the walk was too long, but all agreed that it would be impossible to shorten it; and, as Violet declared that she was not the least fatigued, the lesser evil was therefore chosen. The carriages rolled off; at about half way from Ems, the two empty ones were to wait for the walking party. Lady Madeleine smiled with fond affection, as she waved her hand to Violet the moment before she was out of sight.

"And now," said St. George; "good people all, instead of returning by the same road, it strikes me, that there must be a way through this little wood—you see there is an excellent path.

Before the sun has set, we shall have got through it, and it will bring us out I have no doubt, by the old cottage which you observed, Grey, when we came along I saw a gate, and path there—just where we first got sight of Nassau castle—there can be no doubt about it. You see it's a regular right-angle, and besides varying the walk, we shall at least gain a quarter of an hour, which, after all, as we have to walk near three miles, is an object. It's quite clear—quite clear: If I've a head for any thing, it's for finding my way."

"I think you've a head for every thing," said Aurelia Fitzloom, in a soft sentimental whisper; "I'm sure we owe all our happiness to-day to you!"

"If I have a head for every thing, I have a heart only for one person!"

As every one wished to be convinced, no one offered any argument in opposition to St. George's view of the case; and some were already in the wood.

"St. George, St. George," said Violet Fane,

"I don't like walking in the wood so late; pray come back."

"Oh, nonsense, Violet!—come, come. If you don't like to come, you can walk by the road—you'll meet us round by the gate—it's only five minutes walk." Ere he had finished speaking, the rest were in the wood, and some had advanced. Vivian strongly recommended Violet not to join them; he was sure that Lady Madeleine would not approve it—he was sure that it was very dangerous—extremely dangerous; and, by the bye, while he was talking, which way had they gone? he didn't see them. He halloed—all answered—and fifty thousand echoes besides. "We certainly had better go by the road—we shall lose our way if we try to follow them; nothing is so puzzling as walking in woods—we had much better keep to the road." So by the road they went.

The Sun had already sunk behind the mountains, whose undulating forms were thrown into dark shadow against the crimson sky. The thin crescent of the new moon floated

over the eastern hills, whose deep woods glowed with the rosy glories of twilight. Over the peak of a purple mountain, glittered the solitary star of Evening. As the sun dropped, universal silence seemed to pervade the whole face of Nature. The voice of the birds was stilled; the breeze, which had refreshed them during the day, died away, as if its office were now completed; and none of the dark sounds and sights of hideous Night yet dared to triumph over the death of Day. Unseen were the circling wings of the fell bat; unheard the screech of the waking owl; silent the drowsy hum of the shade-born beetle! What heart has not acknowledged the influence of this hour—the sweet and soothing hour of twilight!—the hour of love, the hour of adoration, the hour of rest!—when we think of those we love, only to regret that we have not loved more dearly; when we remember our enemies only to forgive them!

And Vivian, and his beautiful companion owned the magic of this hour, as all must do—by silence. No word was spoken, yet is

silence sometimes a language. They gazed, and gazed again, and their full spirits held due communion with the starlit sky, and the mountains, and the woods, and the soft shadows of the increasing moon. Oh! who can describe what the o'ercharged spirit feels at this sacred hour, when we almost lose the consciousness of existence, and our souls seem to struggle to pierce futurity! In the forest of the mysterious Odenwald, in the solitudes of the Bergstrasse, had Vivian at this hour often found consolation for a bruised spirit—often in adoring Nature had forgotten man. But now, when he had never felt Nature's influence more powerful; when he had never forgotten man, and man's world more thoroughly; when he was experiencing emotions, which, though undefinable, he felt to be new; he started when he remembered that all this was in the presence of a human being! Was it Hesperus he gazed upon, or something else that glanced brighter than an Evening star? Even as he thought that his gaze was fixed on the countenance of Nature, he found that his eyes

rested on the face of Nature's loveliest daughter!

"Violet! dearest Violet!"

As in some delicious dream, the sleeper is awakened from his bliss by the sound of his own rapturous voice; so was Vivian roused by these words from his reverie, and called back to the world which he had forgotten. But ere a moment had passed, he was pouring forth in a rapid voice, and incoherent manner, such words as men speak only once. He spoke of his early follies — his misfortunes — his misery — of his matured views—his settled principles—his plans —his prospects—his hopes—his happiness—his bliss: and when he had ceased, he listened, in his turn, to some small still words, which made him the happiest of human beings. He bent down—he kissed the soft silken cheek which now he could call his own. Her hand was in his; her head sank upon his breast. Suddenly she clung to him with a strong grasp. "Violet!" my own, my dearest; you are overcome. I have been rash, I have been imprudent. Speak, speak, my beloved! say you are not ill!"

She spoke not, but clung to him with a fearful strength—her head still upon his breast —her full eyes closed. In the greatest alarm, he raised her off the ground, and bore her to the river side. Water might revive her. But when he tried to lay her a moment on the bank, she clung to him gasping, as a sinking person clings to a stout swimmer. He leant over her; he did not attempt to disengage his arms; and, by degrees, by very slow degrees, her grasp loosened. At last her arms gave way and fell by her side, and her eyes partly opened.

"Thank God! thank God! Violet, my own, my beloved, say you are better!"

She answered not—evidently she did not know him—evidently she did not see him. A film was on her sight, and her eye was glassy. He rushed to the water-side, and in a moment he had sprinkled her temples, now covered with a cold dew. Her pulse beat not—her circulation seemed suspended. He rubbed the palms of her hands—he covered her delicate feet with his coat; and then rushing up the bank into

the road, he shouted with frantic cries on all sides. No one came, no one was near. Again, with a cry of fearful anguish, he shouted as if an hyæna were feeding on his vitals. No sound:—no answer. The nearest cottage he remembered was above a mile off. He dared not leave her. Again he rushed down to the water-side. Her eyes were still open — still fixed. Her mouth also was no longer closed. Her hand was stiff—her heart had ceased to beat. He tried with the warmth of his own body to revive her. He shouted—he wept—he prayed. All, all in vain. Again he was in the road—again shouting like an insane being. There was a sound. Hark!—It was but the screech of an owl!

Once more at the river-side—once more bending over her with starting eyes—once more the attentive ear listening for the soundless breath. No sound! not even a sigh! Oh! what would he have given for her shriek of anguish!—No change had occurred in her position, but the lower part of her face had fallen; and there was a general appearance which struck

him with awe. Her body was quite cold:—her limbs stiffened. He gazed, and gazed, and gazed. He bent over her with stupor, rather than grief stamped on his features. It was very slowly that the dark thought came over his mind—very slowly that the horrible truth seized upon his soul. He gave a loud shriek, and fell on the lifeless body of VIOLET FANE!

END OF VOLUME THE THIRD.

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